MUSIC TEACHER

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Dame Evelyn Glennie bangs the drum for young percussionists
See page 26

musicteachermagazine.co.uk
July 2021

Fang Zhang

BBC Young Musician's marimba-playing winner

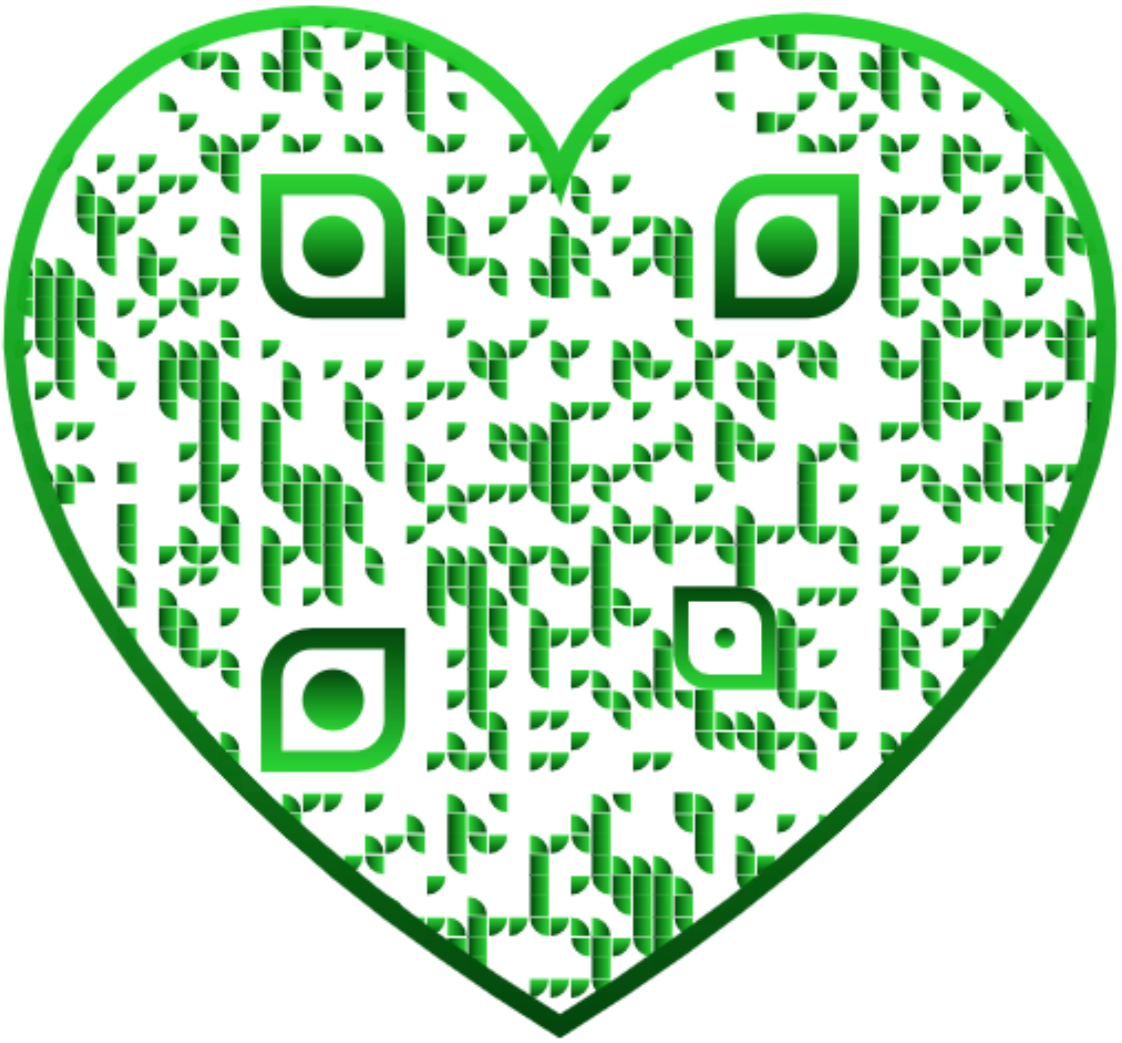
Musician first

Meet Wilamena, the talented 14-year-old with Tourette's

Community and collaboration

Tim Rhys-Evans reveals RWCMD's refreshed undergrad degree

PLUS ▶ KS4/5 composition ▶ Isaac Newton Academy ▶ Primary project ideas ▶ Nate Holder



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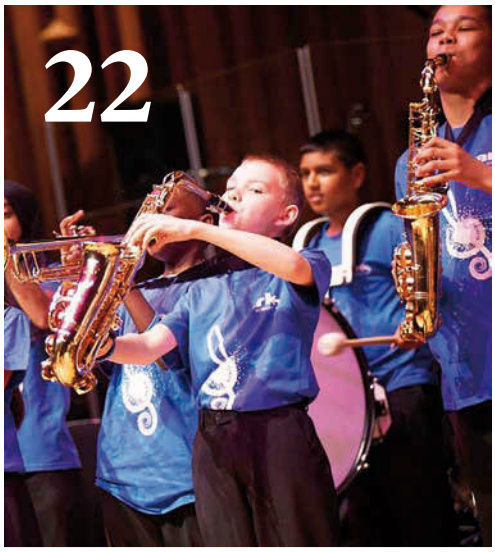

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COVER IMAGE: BBC YOUNG MUSICIAN 2020 WINNER FANG ZHANG PERFORMING AT THE GRAND FINAL WITH THE BBC PHILHARMONIC CREDIT: FABIO DE PAOLA/PA WIRE

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Collective action

We stand in solidarity

As I write, it's the morning after the first evening of the Music Teacher Summit – a three-day online conference on careers, assessment, and teaching skills (available on demand for 3 months). As chair, it's been wonderful to engage with enthusiastic delegates, all keen to further invest in their careers. Last night, the ISM's head of compliance and legal, John Robinson, shared valuable information about rights for music teachers, but his section on safeguarding felt particularly poignant in light of the recently surfacing allegations against El Sistema Venezuela.

You can read about Sistema England and Sistema Scotland's responses in the News (p.8) and view the statements in full on our website, but I feel it is important to highlight the call to action from Sistema England's trustees. Appealing to the international music education community, they ask us to 'work together with urgency to help shift policy to practice', then list the areas in which this needs to be concentrated. It is of paramount importance that we are not complacent when it comes to abuse – as Sistema England points out, we are talking about a global issue. It is the responsibility of us all to further educate ourselves to help protect young musicians at all levels and empower them to speak out, when necessary, thus creating this 'much wider shared culture of accountability'. Let's stand in solidarity with all victims of abuse.

Changing pace somewhat clumsily, I am delighted to present the July issue, jam-packed with inspiring content, both in our percussion focus and elsewhere. On p.16, you will meet all three finalists of BBC Young Musician 2020, including outstanding percussionist Fang Zhang (we all remember the moment he smiled at Mark Wigglesworth), and on p.26, you will find a fascinating interview with the one and only Dame Evelyn Glennie. For those of you in need of something practical, you'll find plenty this month, including Lauren Kosty's handy guide to carrying your new digital skills into your post-lockdown practice (p.20), the first instalment of our mental health and wellbeing column, (p.25), creative ideas for KS4–5 composition (p.36), a project to inspire young children through the music of Errollyn Wallen (p.50), and much more. You'll also meet Tim Rhys-Evans on p.40 and Nate Holder on p.58.

As ever, I would love to hear your feedback/thoughts/ideas, so please do write me a letter (see p.6), and don't forget to register for your free place at the Expo in September (see p.14 and p.46). Enjoy the sun while it lasts!

Harriet Clifford, editor

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Music Teacher is the UK's only magazine aimed at music educators from across the sector. It is a place where music is valued in and of itself, embracing all genres. We offer up new approaches to pedagogy through in-depth features, engaging opinions, lesson plans and schemes of work. We cast a critical eye over the latest research and products to help inform the conversations that shape musical teaching. This is a platform for raising awareness of the key issues affecting music teachers, and for championing existing efforts to ensure music education is accessible to all.

Do you have an opinion you'd like to share? Write to the Editor at music.teacher@markallengroup.com. Each month, the writer of a 'Star Letter' will receive a £25 voucher from Dawsons.

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STAR LETTER ★

Music literacy in decline?

The Society for Music Analysis commissioned me to investigate whether those applying to music degrees were less musically literate than in the past. Data were collected and analysed over the course of two years. A key question is 'What would it mean to be musically literate?' As you might expect, there were different views ranging from a narrower expectation of being able to read and write music to much broader ones. Some of the broader definitions might be called musicianship rather than music literacy. The general view was that music literacy of the narrower kind had declined with implications for universities' entry requirements and courses.

Another aspect that came to the fore was what a socially just music curriculum might be. On the one hand, some of the participants believed music education should provide an opportunity for young people to discover a broader range of music, through engagement with a rich and deep curriculum. On the other, there were strong views that the music curriculum is rooted in a culturally biased past that privileges certain music and associated knowledge.

There was concern about the limited time given to music in primary teacher education courses. Some schools pay for organisations to enrich the school curriculum, with some in-service training available. However, the music education on offer in different areas, either in schools or through music Hubs, varies considerably, with associated implications for progression.

Not all young people aspire to continue with music professionally, of course. Any curriculum has to provide both a general opportunity to learn more about a subject and, hopefully, to find some enjoyment in it, and opportunities for those who are interested to progress to a higher level to develop their interest and enjoyment. As the project report emphasises, research into music education has demonstrated its many benefits time and time again. Therefore, its inclusion in the curriculum is valuable and some might say essential. Although the EBacc has been seen as detrimental to music education, the evidence does not support that view at the moment. The greater issue seems to be patchy provision and variation in aspiration for young people, regardless of preferred music style or genre.

The report was written for the Society for Music Analysis. It was interesting to note that many music teachers, including instrumental ones, did not recognise that they might be teaching music analysis. Of concern in terms of assessment was the requirement for young people to apply analytical techniques suitable for Western Art Music to other styles where they would be inappropriate or less applicable.

This is just an overview of some of the issues raised in the report that are fundamental to music curricula and teaching. The report is available at **www.sma.ac.uk/questioning-the-gap-in-music-literacy-in-england**. *MT* readers are welcome to contact me on mcqueenSMA@gmail.com if they would like a copy of the two-page overview or have any queries.

Dr Hilary McQueen, UCL Institute of Education, University College London

Brilliant Bollo

I've just read the article about Bollo Brook in *MT* [June, pp.22–24] and wanted to say how wonderful it is. Sound Connections has worked with them for a number of years and we have just completed a series of three sessions on social justice, which Colin Brent and his team led. I think they are fabulous and it is so refreshing to see *MT* covering this and giving it the attention it deserves. As an organisation, our focus is beyond schools and with young people, communities and organisations who exist on the fringes, so I thought it was great that you have featured this work.

Philip Flood, director, Sound Connections

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by Harry Venning

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UK Sistema offshoots distance themselves from El Sistema Venezuela

After an article published in the Washington Post on 28 May widely exposed allegations of sexual abuse against El Sistema Venezuela, England and Scotland's offshoots of the globally renowned youth orchestra programme have issued statements in solidarity with victims of sex abuse.

Written by Geoff Baker, professor of music at Royal Holloway, University of London, and author of *El Sistema: Orchestrating Venezuela's Youth*, and William Cheng, chair and associate professor of music at Dartmouth College and author of *Loving Music Till It Hurts*, the article drew on public allegations made by former El Sistema musician Angie Cantero on 29 April. The pair write that the 'open secret' of sexual abuse in El Sistema is 'finally exposed'.

Dated 1 June, Sistema England's statement expresses 'serious concern', continuing: 'That events involving such

ANDOV/ADOBESTOCK

abuses could have taken place is appalling, and all our thoughts and sympathies go to each and every victim.'

The charity trustees also call for 'collaborative international approaches to this widespread problem' and for 'the international music and music education community to support those who are trying hard to solve all issues arising from abuse'. On 10 June, Sistema Scotland also issued a statement, highlighting its status as an 'entirely independent charity with no links in terms of management and governance' to El Sistema.

It continues: 'The allegations of abuse in Venezuela which have surfaced are appalling and must be dealt with in an uncompromising manner. We stand fully alongside any victim of abuse.'

Taking steps to address the allegations, El Sistema issued a statement on 4 June expressing 'absolute solidarity with the victims and their families'.

Baker told *MT*: 'I'm relieved that El Sistema has finally acknowledged this problem, but what took them so long? I raised the issue in my 2014 book, but El Sistema flatly denied it. Now the brand is tainted, are Sistema England and Sistema Scotland going to distance themselves, even change their name? More importantly, are they going to rethink El Sistema's model and methodology? Abuse in such institutions is linked to educational norms.'

Baker's new book, *Rethinking Social Action Through Music*, expands on these questions and is available as a free download at www.openbookpublishers.com.

Music & Drama Education Awards nominations open for 2022

Nominations are now open for the Music & Drama Education Awards 2022, which celebrate the achievements of teachers, school departments and individuals. The Awards will return on 23 March with an in-person ceremony after this year's virtual celebrations.

The event will be held at the London Marriott Hotel, Grosvenor Square, with the expert judging panel and host announced closer to the ceremony. Applications must be submitted by 27 September.

Nominations can be made for

the following categories:

- Outstanding Musical Initiative
- Outstanding Drama Initiative
- Outstanding Music Education Resource
- Outstanding Drama Education Resource
- Excellence in SEND (Music & Drama)
- Excellence in Musical Theatre
- Excellence in Primary/ Early Years (Music & Drama)
- Outstanding School Music Department
- Outstanding School Drama Department
- Francesca Hanley Inspiration Award
- Drama Inspiration Award
- Lifetime Achievement Award

We will also be presenting the Music Teacher and Drama & Theatre Editor's Awards at the ceremony. Make a nomination for 2022 and watch this year's ceremony, which was hosted by Alexander Armstrong and sponsored by Classic FM, at www.musicdramaawards.com.

Queen's Birthday Honours 2021

The work of musicians and educators has been recognised in the Queen's Birthday Honours List 2021, announced on 11 June and naming 1,129 recipients of an award. Among those rewarded for their services to music and music education at OBE, MBE, and BEM level are:

OBE (Officer of the Order of the British Empire)
John Heath Summers, lately CEO, Hallé Orchestra
For services to music and education

MBE (Member of the Order of the British Empire)
James Richard Brand, principal teacher of curriculum, Annan Academy, Dumfries and Galloway, Scotland
For services to music and education

Jess Gillam, saxophonist and presenter
For services to music

Jonathan Rankin Peel, director of strategy and business operations, Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance
For services to higher education

Lorraine Wright, entrepreneur
For services to young people through music

BEM (British Empire Medal)
Matthew Howard Baker, freelance director, Music and Performance for Creative Arts
For services to music and the community in Chester during COVID-19

Dr Noël Harwood Tredinnick, conductor, lecturer, composer, academic, music director
For services to church music and to music education

Geoffrey Michael Simmonds, trustee, Pavilion Opera Educational Trust
For services to education

www.gov.uk/government/news/the-queens-birthday-honours-list-2021

ROBIN CLEWLEY

▲ *Jess Gillam MBE aged 23*

‘Where is the funding for drama and music?’: Covid recovery plan

ESKAY LIM/ADOBESTOCK

Announced during half-term, the government’s latest step in its education recovery plan for England was met with strong criticism from major teaching unions and a resignation from education recovery commissioner Sir Kevan Collins, who called for ‘sport, music and the rich range of activities that define a great education’.

Described as ‘incomplete’ and ‘hugely disappointing’, the plan pledged an additional £1.4bn investment into education, including £1bn for 100 million hours of tutoring, £253m for teacher training and development, and £153m for new programmes for Early Years practitioners.

By the end of the day of the announcement, the government’s education recovery tsar Sir Kevan Collins had resigned, writing in his letter to prime minister Boris Johnson: ‘As I set out in my reports to you, I do not believe that a successful recovery can be achieved with a programme of support of this size.’ He goes on: ‘I believe our approach to recovery should also offer children opportunities to re-engage with sport, music and the rich range of activities that define a great education. I proposed extending school time as a way to provide this breadth, as well as to ensure that additional academic support does not cause existing enrichment activities to be squeezed out.’

Responding to the plan, Dr Mary Bousted, joint general secretary of the National Education Union (NEU), said: ‘The Government’s plans for education recovery for the nation’s pupils are inadequate and incomplete. Rarely has so much been promised and so little delivered.

‘The “new” money being offered amounts to £1.4bn - way below the £15bn sum which Kevan Collins, the Education Recovery tsar, judged is needed to repair the damage done to the nation’s pupils because of Covid.’

She continued: ‘Where in these plans is the funding for extra-curricular activities to support children and young people to regain their confidence in their abilities and talents? Where is the funding for drama and music, sport and skills development?’

The £1.4bn injection is an additional investment on top of the £1.7bn already announced – the Education Policy Institute (EPI) has calculated that this funding commitment over the four years equates to £310 per pupil. This has been compared to the equivalent funding of £1,600 per pupil in the United States and £2,500 per pupil in the Netherlands.

Commenting on the announcement, education secretary Gavin Williamson said: ‘This is the third major package of catch-up funding in twelve months and demonstrates that we are taking a long-term, evidence-based approach to help children of all ages.

‘I am incredibly proud it recognises the efforts and dedication of our teachers who are at the forefront of children’s recovery – making sure every teacher has the opportunity to access world-leading training, giving them the skills and tools to help every child they work with to fulfil their potential.’

The next stage in the government’s recovery plan includes a review of time spent in school and college.

Professor Keith Swanwick receives ISM Lifetime Achievement Award

The Incorporated Society of Musicians (ISM) has presented professor Keith Swanwick with its prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award for his work in music pedagogy, performance psychology and musical experience.

Swanwick’s career as an academic, musician, writer and educator has spanned six decades. His international-renowned work includes a PhD on *Music and the Education of the Emotions* (1974), teaching in various schools and universities, publishing 12 books, editing the British Journal of Music Education, becoming the first chair of the British National Association for Education in the Arts in 1987, and chairing the Music Education Council from 1991 to 1995.

Since *A Basis for Music Education* was published in 1979, Swanwick has gone on to give presentations, workshops, and consultancy in more than 20 countries, and, having previously held the positions of professor of Music Education and dean of research at University College London, Institute of Education, Swanwick is now professor emeritus.

ISM – MARC GASCOIGNE 2021

▲ *Professor Keith Swanwick received his award in a private ceremony at his home in June*

On learning of the award, professor Swanwick said: ‘It certainly doesn’t feel like a lifetime! I have been fortunate that my work has allowed me to follow various musical strands, reflect upon these significant experiences, and engage with many musical and academic communities around the world. Where necessary, I have taken issue, as clearly as possible, with ideas in music education that seemed to need addressing.

‘Throughout my career, I have been stimulated and encouraged by countless friends and colleagues, from Iceland to South America. I have gained so much more than I have given in these relationships, and, in a very real way, I see this ISM Lifetime Achievement Award as being for all of us. On that basis, I am deeply honoured to accept it.’

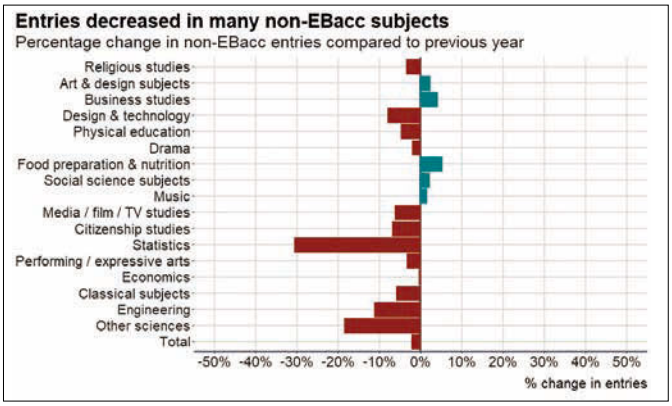
ISM chief executive Deborah Annetts praised Swanwick’s ‘highly relevant’ work, describing him as ‘one of music education’s greatest champions’.

www.ism.org

GCSE and A Level Music entries for 2021 in England remain stable but low

Provisional exam entry statistics published by Ofqual reveal 35,400 entries for GCSE Music in 2021, up 2 per cent on 2020 but down by around a quarter in the last decade. Across subjects in England, entries to both qualification levels remain stable, with GCSE entries increasing by 0.4 per cent, and A Levels increasing by 3 per cent.

While some non-EBacc subjects have seen large decreases this year, Music entries across both GCSE and A Level have also remained consistent since 2020. 35,400 students have been entered for GCSE Music this summer, a 2 per cent increase on the 34,865 who took the qualification in June 2020. However, approximately 54,000 students took the qualification in 2008.



OFQUAL

▲ *Percentage change in non-EBacc entries compared to previous year*

A Level entries have remained almost exactly the same as last year (5,035 in 2020 and 5,045 for 2021), but figures published by Ofqual in 2020 revealed that student numbers for Music had nearly halved in the previous decade.

EBacc subjects continue to account for the majority of GCSE entries at 82 per cent, a figure which has gradually increased since 2017. The only non-EBacc subjects to see increases in GCSE entries this year are Art & design subjects, Business studies, Food preparation & nutrition, Social science subjects, and Music.

Although stable for now, these shrinking statistics for Music have raised concerns among music educators in recent years, with many citing the EBacc, league tables, and reduced government investment in the arts as reasons for the decline.

While exams have been officially cancelled this year, qualifications have continued to go ahead with teacher-assessed grades quality assured by exam boards. www.gov.uk/search/research-and-statistics

Young composers join ABRSM mentor scheme

UK exam board ABRSM has announced the pilot of its mentor scheme to support young composers from a range of backgrounds and communities to learn how to write music for education.

It is hoped that the six-month programme will boost the composers' careers and broaden the variety of music available to everyone, particularly when taking graded exams. The scheme aims to inspire the next generation of artists and creators and will be overseen by composer Sarah Watts and teacher, educator and performer Andy Grappy.

Selected with help from The Ivors Academy, the young composers on the pilot scheme include Andrew Chen, Shruthi Rajasekar, Su Ting Han, Kemal Yusuf, Kristina Arakelyan and James B. Wilson. The young composers will learn more about ABRSM, understand its music education brief, and complete a series of commission tasks.

Crispin Hunt, chair of The Ivors Academy said: 'To inspire the next generation of artists and creators, the music they experience through education must be as diverse, varied and thought-provoking as possible. We're delighted to support this amazing cohort of composers by accelerating their careers in music education and hope to support many more music creators this way in the future.'

Young composer Andrew Chen said: 'To date, my way into music education has been just as a recipient or facilitator in a very narrow sense. This programme represents something much more wide-ranging and integrated – not just writing pieces but seeing how that links back to the entire industry. It's really exciting.'

ABRSM chief executive Chris Cobb said: 'The mentoring scheme is an incredibly exciting element of our work to promote music from a far greater range of communities. All six composers selected with help from our friends at The Ivors Academy for this year's programme are extremely talented individuals in their own right. We're confident that the programme will help them on to the next stages of their careers and, in doing so, inspire an even richer and more exciting variety of music for us all to enjoy in the future.'

ABRSM plans to make the scheme an annual programme, inviting a growing number of composers with different experiences and from a range of backgrounds to take part. gb.abrsm.org/en

▲ *(l-r) Kemal Yusuf, Su Ting Han, Shruthi Rajasekar, Andrew Chen, James B. Wilson, Kristina Arakelyan*

Arts Council England publishes new Music guide for school governing boards

A new guide has been published to help school governing boards in England ensure that all children have access to a high-quality music education.

Created in partnership with Music Mark and the National Governance Association (NGA), the Music guide is part of a collection of refreshed documents published by Arts Council England (ACE) – the others covering Arts, culture and creativity; Art, craft and design; and Dance.

In his foreword, ACE chief executive Dr Darren Henley OBE says: 'The value of creative education in the lives of our young people – and the important role that subjects such as art and design, dance, drama and music have to play alongside English, maths and science – has never been more apparent as we begin to recover from the educational, social and health impacts of COVID-19.

DGLIMAGES/ADOBESTOCK

'Now, as we begin to consider post-pandemic life, we need to ensure that high quality cultural education opportunities are available to every child, no matter what their background. These opportunities should be both formal and informal, in the classroom as part of a broad and balanced curriculum, and outside the classroom too. This is a matter of fairness and opportunity for all children.'

Within the 13-page guide, the recently published Model Music Curriculum (MMC) is described as offering 'guidance and ideas' on how the national curriculum can be delivered and providing a 'springboard' from which to approach teaching music. www.artscouncil.org.uk/guideforgovernors

Composition competition announced for Surrey-based young musicians

Young musicians who live or attend school or college in Surrey are invited to enter a new composition competition as part of Investec International Music Festival's 150th anniversary. The Surrey Hills Young Composer Competition 2022 is open to young people aged 18 or under.

Scored for any combination of violin, cello and piano, composers should write a 4–8-minute piece of music inspired by the county of Surrey. The winning piece will be premiered on 5 May 2022 at Investec International Music Festival, where the young composer will meet the performers – the Sitkovetsky Trio – and receive £500. Second and third prize-winners will also be invited to attend, meet the performers, and will receive cash prizes.

JULIA SEVERINSEN

▲ The Sitkovetsky Trio will perform the winning piece

Compositions should be submitted by 14 January 2022. More information can be found online. www.iimf.co.uk

Digital music education resource pack for KS3 launched by NMC Recordings

DGLIMAGES/ADOBESTOCK

Celebrating 30 years of NMC Recordings, the record label and charity has launched a 'digital exhibition' education resource pack for 11- to 14-year-olds.

The six videos and accompanying worksheets explore contemporary music from the label's catalogue, encouraging students to create a 'panel' for display in the digital exhibition. The panel will be focused on a particular track or album and will incorporate research carried out by the students.

Introducing students to music by composers such as Thea Musgrave, Howard Skempton, Errollyn Wallen, and Judith Weir, the videos and worksheets include contributions from writer and BBC Radio 3 presenter Kate Romano and composer and researcher Dr Stephen Berryman.

To create their panels, students are encouraged to engage with their chosen piece of music by selecting extracts of the score, finding out more information about the composer and what inspires them, and considering their personal reactions to the music. www.nmcrec.co.uk/education/exhibition-project

tes
SEN Show 2021

Visit the UK's leading SEND show

8-9 October 2021 at the Business Design Centre, London

Join SEND experts, education professionals, and exhibitors from across the UK as they meet for the first time in two years at the Tes SEN Show 2021. Over two days, you'll discover the latest teaching techniques, policy updates and resources to empower every pupil, especially those with SEND.

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Aberystwyth Musicfest

Digital Summer School
2–5 August
▶ Courses range from £125 – £395

Delivering masterclasses and specialist courses online throughout the summer, Aberystwyth's Musicfest might be one to share with your students. The Summer School includes courses specialising in saxophone, accordion, percussion, strings, Welsh trad, mindfulness for musicians, and even the composer's toolkit. These 4-day courses are open to school-age children, conservatoire or university students, or even amateur musicians. Bursary applications are available via the festival's website.
musicfestaberystwyth.org

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Trinity College London

Online Webinar Bank
▶ Free

Trinity College London has made its regular support webinars available online. Viewers will need to register for free to access these resources, but once online, there is a plethora of focus areas to view. Acoustic and classical guitar, brass, digital grades and diplomas, drum kit and percussion, electronic keyboard, singing, strings and piano are all addressed in individual webinars, and are available online for teachers and students to peruse.
www.trinitycollege.com/qualifications/music/events

SK Shlomo

Shlomo's Beatbox Adventure for Kids
Various dates from 10 July to 4 November
▶ £10 per ticket

Bringing back his sell-out show, beatboxer SK Shlomo is launching a UK tour of his beatboxing adventure. The show is designed to entertain families and encourage children to try new methods of performance, and tours around the UK between July and November. For the shows in the summer months, tickets are still available for Manchester's Homeground Festival on 10 July and Underbelly Festival in London on 15 August and 19 September.
beatboxadventures.com

NATHAN GALLAGHER

Sing for Pleasure

Children's Singing Week
Stockport: 26–30 July, Walsall 2–6 August
▶ £65 per child

For children aged 9–13, Sing for Pleasure is offering new dates for their popular Singing Week course. This five-day non-residential summer school is led by experienced teachers and choral leaders and aims to develop choral and musicianship skills through fun musical activities. The week will run in Stockport at the end of July and Walsall at the start of August.
singforpleasure.org.uk

ADOBE STOCK/ROBERT KNESHKE

Music & Drama Education Expo | London

24–25 September
Business Design Centre, London
▶ Free

Registration for the Music & Drama Education Expo is open and the programme is live! The free-to-attend conference and exhibition will provide music educators with unparalleled networking opportunities after a year-and-a-half of online events, as well as a jam-packed two days of expert-led CPD sessions, workshops and panels.
musicanddramaeducationexpo.co.uk

Music Education Council

Music Education: 'Ten Years On' a Strategic Review
15 July, 10.00am – 12.00pm
▶ £6

Reflecting on the past ten years, MEC's strategic review seminar discusses what has changed in music education since the publication of the National Plan for Music Education was published in 2011 as part of the coalition government. Attendees will join professionals from across the sector to ask: what next for music education? Panellists and speakers include Chi-chi Nwanoku, Hannah Fouracre, Matt Griffiths, and others.
bit.ly/3iwItzi

Let's get excited

There are only a few months to go until the Music & Drama Education Expo comes to London on 24 and 25 September 2021. Indulge us for a moment as we guide you through the medley of CPD sessions across the two days

We can hardly remember what it's like to go to a big, in-person event – the well-planned journey, the endless takeaway coffees, the excitement, the music, the immense sound of hundreds of people chatting, laughing, and speaking enthusiastically through loudspeakers. The fact that it's been so long since most of us were in this kind of lively face-to-face environment (school doesn't count) makes this year's Music & Drama Education Expo in London all the more thrilling. Taking place on 24 and 25 September – giving you plenty of time of settle into the new academic year – at a new venue, the Business Design Centre (BDC) in Islington, the Expo will be a brilliant opportunity for music educators to come together after such a challenging year, learn new skills, gather ideas, and feel inspired to head back into their practice with confidence.

So, what could your two-day CPD extravaganza look like? Registration is now open online (it's all free), and you can also view the programme and sign up to specific sessions. Here, we'll look at what each day *could* look like for an intrepid music teacher making the most of the CPD sessions on both the Friday and the Saturday.

Day 1: The 9:30am start in Islington is a breeze for you, accustomed as you are to slurping coffee as you untangle 30 sets of headphones at (what surely must be) dawn, or battling through admin over breakfast before your first instrumental pupil arrives. You're in for a treat, as beatbox tutor and musician Jack Salt kicks off the Expo with a hold-nothing-back-while-being-Covid-secure **Beatboxing warm-up**, following a brief hello and welcome from heads of content Harriet Clifford and Sarah Lambie.

Sufficiently warmed, you quickly deliberate between the three music sessions running from 10am and 11am, but in the end opt for **Making the case for music and wellbeing**, run by Charly Richardson and Keith Sykes from Lewisham Music. After a fulfilling session, during which you learnt about Hub-led community music programmes and

▶ *All images: Music & Drama Education Expo 2020, Olympia London*

their role in supporting vulnerable young people, you have 15 minutes to grab a coffee before the next slot at 11:15am.

You go for the Keynote Theatre session with renowned composer and writer Paul Harris, who is leading **Sight-reading journeys: a new approach**, before you grab an early lunch with a colleague and enjoy some in-person networking and/or general chat. Next up at 12:30pm, it's the **Day 1 Symposium**, which you've been looking forward to. It's a chance to hear a hot-topic discussion between representative of some of the key organisations in music education, including the Music Education Council, the Musicians' Union, the Incorporated Society of Musicians, and the Music Teachers' Association. Afterwards, you grab a quick drink and head back into the Keynote Theatre for **Learn more about ABRSM's Performance Grades** with chief examiner John Holmes, which leaves you keen to discuss the exams with some of your students the following week.

There's a lot to take in, so you have a slightly longer break between slots, catching up with a colleague about a session you were sad to miss earlier – **Making music online: What did we learn from the pandemic?** – before settling into the Workshop Theatre at 2:45pm for **Music, diversity and disability – working across difference** with Graham Dowdall. After a thought-provoking, engaging session, it's time for your final CPD of the day, which you decide will be Mike Simpson's **Using body percussion for your recovery curriculum** at 3:45pm. Armed with plenty of practical ideas and food for thought, you emerge from the BDC, ready to rest up and do it all again tomorrow!

Day 2: Fresh-faced and raring to go, you really get into this morning's warm-up, **A feast of gathering songs**, with Sing for Pleasure's Ula Weber, knowing that the songs will definitely come in handy back in the classroom. At 10:15am, you make your way to the Workshop Theatre for **How to teach improvisation** with jazz education legend

What could your two-day CPD extravaganza look like? Registration is now open online

Richard Michael – you've been looking forward to this one, as improvising doesn't come naturally to you. You leave the session feeling much more confident, then head over to **The music teacher bias** with Benjamin Turner. Listening with an open mind, you find this session really interesting, and you come away with some concrete ideas for revitalising your curriculum to ensure that you're teaching as widely and accessibly as possible.

After a quick bite to eat with a new friend, you're torn between **Performance health: What is healthy practice and how can you embed it in your teaching?**, **Whole class student brass** and **Digital arts education**, but in the end you opt for the latter. After the last 15 months, you feel as though everyone has had enough of online learning (and teaching), but the session gets you thinking about the potential benefits of a longer-term blended approach. After all, you're a bit of a tech whizz by now, so why let that go to waste? At 2pm, you attend **Context is key: GCSE and A Level success** led by James Manwaring, but make a mental note to catch up with your colleague afterwards because you know he was at **Improbable tales: Using musical theatre to tell 'our' stories** and you're interested to hear the key takeaways.

Making it just in time, you find a seat in the Keynote Theatre for your last CPD of the day. This session is on **Empowering young transgender voices through singing**, run by Alexander Pullinger, and you're keen to learn as much as you can. After this, you decide to meet your colleague for a coffee, and you both share some of your highlights of the weekend. She teaches younger children and has enjoyed **Song writing in the primary school classroom**, **Frozen the Musical: Fixer Upper movement and music** with Disney Teaching Artists, **From body sounds to percussion instruments**, and **Mindful music in KS2-4**. She was also able to attend some of the others you couldn't make, and shares her notes on **Your voice in action**, which she says was really practical, and **Running a private music or drama teaching practice**, which your (school-based) colleague dropped in on 'to keep her options open'.

Phew! You've come to the end of the Music & Drama Education Expo 2021. It's been a busy two days and you need some time to process it all, but you're feeling inspired and challenged by everything you heard. Although a little more tiring, you're pleased to finally attend CPD in person again after a year or so of online webinars. It's been great to get involved with the practical sessions, as well as try out new materials and resources at the exhibitor stands. You've also really enjoyed the performances and interviews, which filled the space with sound and energy across the two days. All that's left to do now is make your way home after another brilliant weekend at the Expo. **MT**

Register for the Expo for free and sign up to specific sessions at **www.musicanddramaeducationexpo.co.uk**. New content, including performances and exhibitor sessions, will be announced soon.

Tapping into the next generation

After a year-long postponement and a spectacular grand final, BBC Young Musician 2020 was awarded to marimba-led percussionist Fang Zhang. Hattie Fisk speaks to him and finalists Annemarie Federle and Ewan Millar about the competition

FABIO DE PAOLA/ PA WIRE

▲ *Fang Zhang performing on the marimba in the grand final*

'If you really like something, keep on with it', says a jovial Fang Zhang – winner of BBC Young Musician 2020 and a young percussionist renowned for practising until the early hours of the morning. He adds: 'Dedication is the most important thing in a musician, but that is also applicable to anything in life.' Born in China's Henan province, Zhang is a recent student of Chetham's School of Music in Manchester and is speaking to me from China via Zoom with the assistance of an interpreter.

Celebrating spectacular young musicians from across the country, the biennial televised BBC Young Musician competition more often than not sees performers on the piano, cello or violin awarded the title. However, in a year like no other, it is fitting that the BBC Young Musician 2020 should be won by an irregular choice – a marimba player. Fang Zhang is the second percussionist to ever win the competition; the first being Adrian Spillett in 1998.

Broadcast on BBC Four and BBC Radio 3 at the beginning of May, the competition was hosted by presenter Josie d'Arby, conductor and organist Anna Lapwood, and saxophonist Jess Gillam. The all-star judging panel for the grand final included experimental composer Shiva Feshareki, conductor and trumpeter Ryan Bancroft, renowned performer and composer Mark Simpson, and distinguished composer Errollyn Wallen.

The motivation

Zhang's winning performance in the final, which is available to watch on the BBC website until April 2022, was extremely emotive. He was commended for his musicality and his performative nature, as well as his technical flair. He won over the judges with his contemporary marimba repertoire, including *Prism Rhapsody* by Japanese composer and marimba innovator Keiko Abe. On winning the award, Zhang told the BBC: 'I am honoured and delighted to win BBC Young Musician 2020 and feel so lucky considering the talent of the other finalists.' Chair of the competition jury and chief executive of Saffron Hill, Angela Dixon, said that the finalist's performances showed 'exceptional musicianship'. She commented: 'Fang chose to perform on a single instrument, the marimba, but elicited a kaleidoscope of colours and expression from it that deeply moved the jury and presenters. It was a privilege to be one of the few people to hear his performance live.'

FABIO DE PAOLA/ PA WIRE

▶ *Fang Zhang with his award*

Zhang trained at Qingdao Percussion College in China, where he was scouted by Le Yu, deputy director of percussion at the Royal Northern College of Music, and was asked to study in Manchester. Yu has been a huge influence on Zhang, he says, being the person who encouraged him to enter the BBC Young Musician competition.

As the second Asian winner of the award, Fang Zhang is following in the footsteps of 19-year-old American-born/UK-based pianist Lauren Zhang who won with competition in 2018. Lauren Zhang has gone on to start an illustrious career as a professional pianist; she had her debut at the BBC Proms in 2018 and appeared as a soloist with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, European Union Chamber Orchestra, China National Symphony Orchestra and Adelaide Symphony Orchestra among others.

As a member of the China Youth Percussion Orchestra, Fang Zhang has been performing around the world since he was 11 years old. Despite only being 17, he has won international percussion competitions in Japan, the USA, China and now the UK. He makes clear that his first percussion teacher and president of the Shanghai National Percussion Association, Chen ShaoLun, made a massive impact on the course of his life. Zhang says: 'Chen ShaoLun not only taught me skills in playing percussion, but also taught me how to be a good person and deal with things in my life. He shaped my personality and taught me not to give up.'

'Chen ShaoLun not only taught me skills in playing percussion, but also taught me how to be a good person and deal with things in my life'

Zhang explains that in the future he wants to widen the reach of percussion, especially in his home country. 'I would like to use competitions such as this one to make percussion more well known in China,' Zhang says. 'I would like to be a professor in the future and encourage more students to stay in China to study percussion, rather than study abroad as I have.'

As a final remark, Zhang leaves me with some sound advice: 'The most important quality in a musician is to treat every performance very seriously and prepare well for it. Young musicians need to ask themselves serious questions, such as "Why are you learning music?" and "what influence do you want to make on the field of music?" when they start practising.'

A year of improvement

The competition's grand final was postponed due to the pandemic, leaving performers with an extra year to perfect their pieces. The semi-final was recorded pre-Covid in March 2020 but wasn't broadcast until the end of April this year. Oboist and finalist Ewan Millar believes the time in between improved his performance of *Legacy* by Oscar Navarro dramatically.

FABIO DE PAOLA/PA WIRE

◀ *Ewan Millar performing in the grand final*

'I truly think it made my performance better,' says Millar. 'That was made quite obvious to me when watching the semi-final back – I was happy with how I played but I also noticed a whole myriad of differences. Having a whole year, it meant that by the end you had really lived and breathed the performance. It meant that within the boundaries of this work that you knew so well, you also had this freedom of interpretation – spontaneous freedom – simply because of how well you knew all the ins-and-outs.'

Winner of the woodwind category, 19-year-old Millar from Reading is now in his second year reading music at Oxford University. Revealing the secret to his success as an oboist, Millar explains: 'It's not about doing huge amounts in one go or doing it perfectly when you play. Doing little bits every day will be so much more productive than feeling any pressure.'

Each finalist performed with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra led by conductor Mark Wigglesworth – a unique experience for any young musician. 'I had never played with an orchestra of that calibre before, and they are just so immediately receptive to everything you do.' Millar explains. 'They are incredibly malleable players. So much of British music making is being able to show up on the day and immediately pull out a perfect performance with very little rehearsal. So actually, only having two 15-minute rehearsals with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra was just enough so that they were familiar enough to respond within the music to what you were doing.'

'It was slightly overwhelming,' Millar admits. 'At the first rehearsal I had not played with an orchestra that could make that much sound before. I thought it would be more of a wall of sound, but they balanced with me perfectly.'

The bigger picture

The third finalist was 18-year-old Annemarie Federle. She won the brass final on the French horn and is currently in her first year studying at the Royal Academy of Music in London. Her performance of the *Horn Concerto* by Ruth Glipps in the grand final was highly commended by the judges. 'I always get nervous for everything, so I was expecting to be nervous,' she laughs. 'But I think it is easier to play with an orchestra than it is just with a piano because you feel very supported. I ended up really enjoying it.'

FABIO DE PAOLA/PA WIRE

▲ *Annemarie Federle performing in the grand final*

'I was actually surprised at how much I had improved over the past year. I thought I would struggle quite a lot because of the lack of performance experience, but when I compare my semi-final performance to now, I didn't realise how much I had improved. It is so hard to see the bigger picture when you are practising the little things.'

When asked about their inspirations, Millar and Federle both mention musicians that they had been able to meet thanks to the competition. Federle explains: 'One of my teachers, David Pyatt, was the first and only horn winner of the competition and he's obviously been a massive inspiration for me. He is also at this point the only person who has recorded the piece that I have played. I would also say a massive inspiration are my peers. I think you can learn so much from who you surround yourself with.'

Millar adds: 'One of my biggest inspirations was actually there at the grand final – Nicholas Daniel. He is someone who every oboist knows and is just phenomenal. He has used his platform and career to commission huge numbers of works, which has meant he has defined the modern oboe world and the oboe repertoire.'

Crucial traits

Despite the youth of the finalists, they all have a grasp of the music industry and what it takes to become a professional. Federle believes that ambition is the key to success as a musician, saying, 'You have to be very ambitious, and you have to have high expectations of yourself because it is such a competitive industry. You have to get on with people as well, but definitely have high ambitions'. She also adds that, for young musicians, 'It's just about gathering as much experience as you can. For me, it was about starting in tiny orchestras and youth ensembles and gradually building it up.'

Millar has a different opinion: 'I think the most important quality in a musician is perspective. Especially if you're a soloist, it can be a really isolating task – it is flawed because musicians are constantly shaped by those around them. Which musicians are successful can seem capricious when there are so many talented people out there. So, I think it is far more useful to value all the musicians around you and what they each bring to the communal music making experience than it is to be solipsistically obsessed with your own self-improvement and success.'

Fresh perspectives

Both Millar and Federle are aware of the element of elitism in classical music and are advocates for breaking this down. Their youthful viewpoint on schooling and the country's approach to early music education is an interesting one. 'Obviously schools are limited by budgets and access to teachers, but I think one way to awaken a passion for music making in children is to encourage more collaborative ensembles and group performances,' Millar says.

'That way it doesn't feel like a forced discipline that your parents or teachers are making you do, at least at first. The community and ensemble feel should be present from the beginning. I think that's what makes music making enjoyable. Also, I think in some cases it is crucial to give students the opportunity and freedom to develop their own internal drive to become better at their instrument. I feel like that can be inculcated if students feel like they have a sense of control and agency over their repertoire.'

Federle adds: 'For me, it was very natural to pick up an instrument because my parents both do music as a hobby. If we can create that kind of environment in schools, where instruments aren't just for the few or the elite, and it is just something that everyone naturally does, I think that would change a lot of the preconceptions of the classical music industry.

'So much of music isn't being on your own practising, it is about collaborating and performing together. That is what made me want to do music as a career – working with other people who have the same interests. That element of music is really important.'

Looking to the future

BBC Young Musician has given the next generation a platform to celebrate their passions, but also to question the existing methods in classical music education. Not only are these finalists bringing lesser-used instruments to the forefront of the classical music world, but they are also questioning how we can be more inclusive in our teaching.

The youthful perspectives that Zhang, Federle and Millar hold shine an optimistic light to the future of the industry and reinforces the ever-changing perception of the nature of classical music within wider society. The fruits of BBC Young Musician do not stop after the final, as inspiration to other young musicians will continue to grow long after the ceremony has passed. No doubt each of these musicians will continue to have illustrious musical careers and will go on to further inspire hopeful students and teachers across the nation. **MT**

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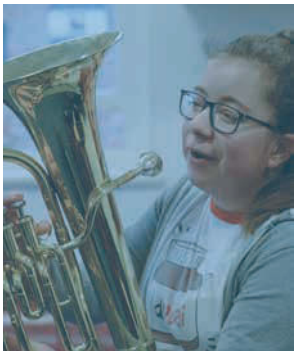

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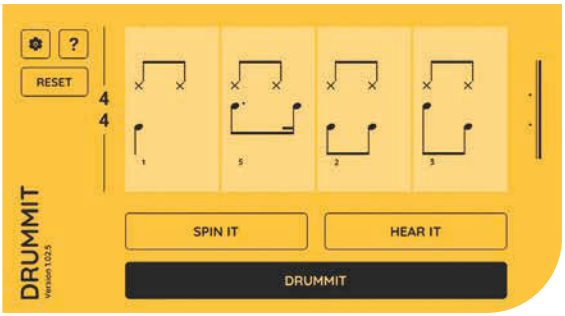
Instrumental lessons learned

While it's a relief to be largely teaching in person again, Lauren Kosty reminds us that instrumental teachers need not let their hard work during lockdown go to waste



▶ *Drummit is a simple groove library app*

There's no question, the learning curve was fierce. Zoom, Skype or what have you, we were grateful for a way to continue teaching in an unprecedented pandemic, but my word, we worked hard! After all, it was either go online or go unemployed. Fast forward 14 months and most lessons are delivered on campus or in homes again, but the skills we learnt teaching online need not fade away like many other lockdown restrictions. Our foray into digital delivery has offered the opportunity to flex some new skills. So, whether you're continuing online, in person, or both, let's keep flexing!

Use a digital drive

Whichever service you prefer, a cloud-based drive for digital notes is a game changer. Create during lessons, archive online, access via device. You can send it home via link or share button as a bonus mid-week reminder about practice goals, and copying in parents keeps them in the loop. Plus, you can search back as a precursor to lesson planning or a brief for the upcoming week. Win-win!

Expand your collection of tools

Brick and mortar classrooms have always offered visual aids, but online lessons kicked that up a notch. Screen sharing and toolbar functions were our new personal assistants. Going forward, get yourself a whiteboard app for tablet or smart phone. You can use it to demonstrate then hit the save button to drag and drop into digital notes. Screen sharing original PDFs and video files was a great take-away too. In this case, building an archive of warm-ups and exercises as well as utilising a library of demo videos can be a huge accelerator to learning. Pre-record yourself playing common examples and include a link along with weekly notes.

Add variety with supplementary apps

Using apps can even make practising feel like a game. Take Drummit, a smartphone and tablet app released by educator, Keith Bartlett. This is a simple groove library based on combinations of kick, snare and hi hat – the fun element being the 'Spin it' feature, offering a random beat generator displayed like a slot machine. Smooth interface and audio playback helps students to 'Hear it' before they attempt to 'Drummit' – a mode that enables you to adjust BPM and play along with audio while a cursor highlights counts in succession.

Another great teaching tool for drummers is Groove Scribe, available from international educator Mike Johnston. This browser-based tool is a simple notation software and drum machine in one. Unlike traditional software, it can notate a short pattern or fill within seconds using a quick-to-load web-based approach. Perfect for transcribing notation in lesson time, it has functionality to change time signatures and subdivisions effortlessly as well as playback in differing BPM or feel. You can even hit the download button to save a short PNG image to drop in – you guessed it – digital notes!

Check your student's home setup

This is something many of us never had the chance to do before. Of course, it seems like a no-brainer to us, but these are the things to lookout for: Is the music stand set up for good posture? Is the device loud enough to play along? Is there a metronome and/or tuner handy? If they play keyboard or drums, is the stand high enough? As we know, this stuff is key for developing solid skills. Even more importantly, online lessons get students used to playing at home. As creatures of habit, we're naturally more comfortable repeating what we've done before. Do one lesson online per term and get that practice ball rolling.

After a year-long dive into lessons online and a rather arduous adjustment, it's nice to know that we can keep some of those new skills. We certainly won't be wearing any rose-tinted glasses when we look back at this pandemic, but necessity is the mother of invention after all. A new way of delivering music lessons has filled up our bag of tricks and maybe even broadened our students' experience. Let's take the door prize and run. **MT**

www.drummit.co.uk; www.mikeslessons.com/apps

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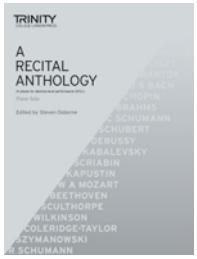

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Beyond the Big Band Project

What does an outstanding school music department look like? Greg Coughlin, director of music and Big Band at Isaac Newton Academy, speaks to David Guinane following his department's win at the Music & Drama Education Awards earlier this year

▲ *Greg Coughlin*

Isaac Newton Academy (INA) in Ilford opened its doors to 180 Year 7 students in 2012. The vast majority of students are from a South Asian ethnic heritage background, and many speak English as an additional language. From the outset, most students started secondary school with very little musical experience. Through targeted funds provided by the school's sponsor, Gerard Griffin, the 'Big Band Project' at INA provides each student with an instrument when they join the school. Director of music Greg Coughlin's innovative curriculum has been hugely successful, with 100 students taking GCSE Music, and many continuing to A Level. Results over the last four years have been outstanding, with almost all students passing, and 50 per cent of students achieving grades 7-9 in GCSE Music.

DG: Greg, congratulations on being crowned 'Outstanding School Music Department'. How did it feel when it was announced?

GC: I was delighted. It felt like a moment of recognition for us as a team at INA. When the school began, we developed a vision for music education that we've been implementing and refining for nearly a decade. To have our vision for an inclusive music education recognised externally is really special to us.

DG: Let's dive into the set-up of your department. How is music delivered in your school?

GC: At Key Stage 3, students receive two hours of music education each week. One hour is very recognisable as a 'music lesson', while the other is a 'Big Band' lesson; a triple-staffed session in which students are divided into three groups (saxophones, brass, rhythm section) and taught by specialist teachers. All our teaching happens in-house, with no individual peripatetic lessons delivered in school. Students receive an instrument when they begin school in Year 7 (and currently, as the primary school develops, Year 4). At GCSE and A Level, the pattern of triple or double-staffed instrumental lessons and single-staffed 'music' lessons continues. Alongside our curriculum, we have a thriving extra-curricular programme, with hundreds of students inspired by music-making in a huge range of choirs and bands.

DG: How do students progress as musicians at INA?

GC: Our established 'routes of progression' are integral to our success. Every aspect of the department is focused on one or more of these, be it drumming, singing, music production, composing, or instrumental performance. We have developed clear pathways for all students to improve as musicians, from absolute beginner to A Level success. Over the years we have built a system of tasks, assessments, video support and examples of student work, all of which empower students to improve. The biggest challenge developing this system has been making tough decisions about what musical activities directly support our inclusive vision, and these established 'routes', but these decisions are more than vindicated when you see the number of students making great progress.

DG: Having grappled with those decisions, what types of music are most common at INA?

GC: The original title of the 'Big Band Project' is a little misleading. It was chosen because each KS3 class is approximately the size of a traditional Big Band, so by creating such an ensemble in each class, it feels authentic. The instrumentation of a Big Band is accessible, and it can do justice to a wide range of genres, particularly more popular styles. However, you won't hear much 'Big Band Jazz' at INA. If anything, the students who have taken the Big Band route identify most closely with the Hip Hop Brass Band tradition of New Orleans. This style has resonated strongly with our students; it has a rich history that beings at the birth of jazz, has constantly re-invented itself throughout the development of popular music, and has huge relevance today. It is a music which connects closely to its community, which is something we try to emulate in school. Our curriculum takes this much further, and we study a huge range of music at KS3. In addition, we focus on representing the community we serve; the popularity of dhol drumming being a good example.

DG: How would you describe the 'culture' of the department you've created?

GC: As I've mentioned, it is important that the musical activities we offer represent the students and their communities. They have to be inspired by music-making in school, as music rarely features – and is sometimes even discouraged – at home. The core repertoire we learn, play and study has become embedded in the culture of the department. Everyone learns many of the same pieces, and as a result the younger ones can be inspired and mentored by those further up the school. Our concerts are participatory, everyone sings along, and there is a real joy in the music-making at INA, which we all cherish.

DG: A decade into the project, how would you assess its impact, and what does the future hold?

GC: When the school started, the founding headteacher Rachel Macfarlane and I shared a passion for inclusive music education. We rejected the elitism that is so often found in the subject, with the division between 'musical' and 'non-musical' students becoming apparent at the earliest stages of education. Through this vision, and the generous funding of Gerard Griffin, we wanted to build a music department that would allow any student to succeed at GCSE Music (and beyond) through classroom music alone. The award, alongside the comments from the judging panel, acknowledge our success and justify our guiding philosophy. We want to continue to develop this project. Next year we welcome our first cohort of Year 7s who have benefitted from the Big Band Project at primary school, having learnt their instruments from Year 4. Moving forward, we want to build on this primary experience to push our musicians even further, to grow our department, and fully realise our inclusive vision.

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'We wanted to build a music department that would allow any student to succeed at GCSE Music (and beyond) through classroom music alone'

I have followed the music department at INA for many years, and it is no surprise that this incredible team has been recognised as the 'Outstanding School Music Department' this year. As a head of music, I often reflect on what I can learn from the 'INA model', and which aspects I can implement in my own setting.

The Big Band Project grabs the headlines as outwardly the most 'innovative' part of what happens at INA. It works incredibly well in their specific setting for a few reasons. Of course, outstanding teaching, as well as generous funding for the project. The pedagogy behind it works because the intake is a more 'level-playing field' in terms of musical experience, compared with many other schools. However, the music department at INA is so much more than this project. The two hours a week of music-making, alongside the extensive extra-curricular programme, and the clear 'routes of progression', are what make INA so successful. So many schools have one hour of music (or even less), and the rest of a student's musical experience comes from elsewhere (peripatetic lessons, Hubs, music schools, etc.). Those additional opportunities exist for some but, crucially, not all students, despite the best efforts of all working in the sector.

Music at INA is truly inclusive. It doesn't just 'provide' opportunities for all, but actively works with every student to make them a musician, to give them pathways to achieve and progress with their music-making, and to be inspired by what goes on in the school. The language in their curriculum reinforces this; students don't just study various styles and traditions, they 'become' drummers, singers and composers. The fact that you can join INA in Year 7, with no prior musical experience, and achieve top grades at GCSE, based solely on in-school music-making, is truly remarkable. We tell ourselves that this is possible in theory, but in reality it is rarely true. INA proves it can be done on a huge scale, a testament to the inclusive philosophy of their department. **MT**

◀ *Both images: Ark Music Gala at the Barbican in 2017*

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Reset and reconfigure

In the first instalment of our new mental health and wellbeing column, Laura Al-Bandar, children and young people service's lead and music therapist at Chiltern Music Therapy, provides a refresher on what music teachers can do each day to support their students' mental wellbeing

As Covid restrictions begin to ease, more of us are starting to think about what we have learnt over this time and what kind of world we want to see when we get to the other side. The prevalence of mental health issues and the strain on services such as CAMHS have been at their limits for a long time, and feelings of stress and anxiety have only been heightened further for many children and teachers. With hopes that things can start to move forward now, the upcoming summer holidays could provide some much-needed space for everyone to reset and reconfigure how we think about and support mental health in education.

It has become clear that if we want to truly improve child mental health then a huge shift is required, but this sometimes feels impossible and can make people feel disempowered and disengaged. However, we can reframe this and recognise that supporting mental health is a collective responsibility, and that, alongside these larger systemic changes, sometimes the smallest actions are what make the most significant impact on people. I'm sure we can all think of a particular moment when somebody put in that little bit of effort or said something kind which made all the difference to us, and these moments should not be underestimated.

Music can translate the most complex, hard-to-reach experiences into an audible and accessible medium, and learning music can offer opportunities for building confidence and ownership for individuals and groups. Because of this, music teachers and practitioners often have a unique relationship with their students and are therefore well placed to offer wellbeing support, so it makes sense to maximise on this and make sure they are properly resourced and equipped to do this well. To move things along, here are a few suggestions for some practical next steps.

Start a conversation

Rather than the conventional 'how are you?', we could start to show genuine interest in our students by learning about who they are as people and how they experience different moments in their lives. If it is hard to start this conversation verbally, perhaps the music can act as a springboard. This could be done by asking students to explore feelings by playing a piece in different ways, or asking them what they visualise when they hear or play.

MICROMONKEY/ADOBESTOCK

Music teachers and practitioners often have a unique relationship with their students and are therefore well placed to offer wellbeing support

Place the student at the centre

It is important to not only acknowledge what students have to say about their thoughts and feelings, but to allow their own diverse personalities and perspectives to be nurtured so they can truly express themselves through their music. This might require some flexibility as to how we think about goals and what is the 'right' way to engage in music, but can really help to improve self-esteem and independence. If there are expectations from the larger education system that need to be met, then perhaps a compromise is needed to work towards both approaches. Perhaps allocating a portion of the lessons to focus on something that the student would like to work on, such as a songwriting project or improvisation, would create more balance.

Understand your own part

It is really important to know your own boundaries in terms of what you can and can't offer to students so that it feels safe for everyone involved. Make sure that you resource yourself to be able to support students effectively, and recognise when the support that is needed is out of your skill set and refer them on to the relevant person. It is essential to make self-care a priority and a regular part of your week so that you also have the emotional capacity to support others. If this is easily forgotten, try scheduling it in so that you have protected time to do something for yourself.

We all have the power to contribute to mental health on an individual and community level, and music is one of the most powerful ways of influencing that change, big or small. Let's take the societal changes that we are seeing as an opportunity to make a difference right now and in the long term. **MT**

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JIM CALLAGHAN

Drumming up future talent

Despite being the world's premier solo percussionist, Dame Evelyn Glennie still finds time to support the next generation of musicians through her work with charities, schools, and conservatoires. **Emily Gunton** meets Dame Evelyn to learn more

'I wanted to study with James Blades because not only was he was a great percussionist, but because even though he was in his 80s, he was forward-thinking and a brilliant communicator'. These are the words of the world's most famous percussionist, Dame Evelyn Glennie, who chats with me on Zoom while nestled between a five-octave marimba and some of the 2,000 instruments she has crammed into her studio at her Cambridgeshire home.

A Grammy award-winning artist, who studied with James Blades at the Royal Academy of Music, she has recently added a new chapter and foreword to the book *Percussion Instruments and their History* [see p.54 for a review], penned by Blades over 50 years ago. Affectionately known in the profession as the 'bible' due to it being the only book of its kind, it has recently been updated with additional chapters by Glennie and Neil Percy, principal percussionist of the London Symphony Orchestra.

'Over the last few decades, there has been an explosion of different percussion performances, and of course, we now have percussion concertos,' she muses, which gives us a glimpse of what the new release has in store. But the additional chapter, featuring solo percussion, would not have been written if it were not for a farmer's daughter pushing the boundaries and putting percussion firmly on the map as a solo instrument.

PHILIPP RATHMER

A career of 'firsts'

Until Dr, professor, Dame Evelyn (yes, she has the full set) burst onto the scene as the first solo percussionist to play at the BBC Proms in 1989, percussion was not seen as a solo instrument. Through her determination, she became the world's first person to have a career as a solo percussionist. For the first ten years of her career, almost every performance she gave was a first – the first time an orchestra performed a percussion concerto, the first solo percussion performance at a particular venue, or the world premiere of a new piece.

When asked why it took so long for the music industry to wake up and recognise percussion as a solo instrument, Glennie is remarkably nonchalant. 'The industry had got too comfortable, and people had to think outside of the box,' she comments. 'I was really frustrated that percussion was not included in the BBC Young Musician competition, so I bombarded the director with letters, and he eventually allowed me to give him a 30-minute recital – at my own expense – to prove there was enough repertoire available to include percussion in the competition.'

Thankfully, she proved her point, and the percussion category was launched in 1994. Over the years, numerous contestants have performed some of the 150 solo pieces she has commissioned or composed, although it is worth noting that none of the percussion finalists has been a woman, which makes her rise to stardom even more remarkable.

Despite being a global superstar, she is someone who does it all, with recent work focusing on charitable organisations. Since May 2020, she has been president of charity Help Musicians, formerly known as the Musicians Benevolent Fund. Following in the footsteps of Sir Edward Elgar and Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, she is the third president and the only woman in the charity's history. With her trademark Aberdonian lilt, she explains, 'It is such an extraordinary organisation. It does not just help financially but works with musicians of all ages to provide support – not just financial but with wellbeing too. The support network is incredible, and the charity links with other organisations to provide whatever support is needed. They are currently on phase four of their Financial Hardship Funding, which is remarkable, and they have delivered over £15.5m of funding since March 2020.'

Spirit of inclusion

Although 'Brand-Evelyn' is international – there are podcasts, TED talks, jewellery lines, books, T-shirts and even water bottles – she is never far from her Scottish roots and is now ambassador of Sistema Scotland. During the pandemic, the organisation has hosted more than 9,000 online lessons as part of its Big Noise programme, and Glennie is incredibly proud of all its work.

'The organisation focuses on creativity and inclusivity. The programmes are open to all children, and thanks to technology, we have been able to open up to everyone,' she

It is evident that she has big plans and, in true Glennie style, wants to get stuck in and have an impact

says. Having lost her hearing during childhood, she feels strongly about inclusivity, noting that the Royal Academy of Music initially rejected her application due to her deafness. It went against the spirit of inclusion she had experienced during her childhood which has had a lasting impact.

'Sistema Scotland can help families who do not have access to Wi-Fi or technology, and along with group consultations, we have been able to ensure our sessions are now accessible to all. This allows people to be independent and involved, even if we need to provide technology or someone to sign for D/deaf participants, for example. They must be included and feel included as a member of society.'

Collaboration and communication are recurring themes in our conversation. 'Don't work in isolation' is something Glennie mentions on several occasions, with equality, inclusivity and accessibility being the cornerstones of her work. Her rise from the small village of Methlick to the bright lights of London are well documented. Yet, she has never lost sight of the opportunities given to her during her childhood, particularly the unfailing support of her percussion teacher, Ron Forbes. He was the one who taught her to listen with other parts of her body as she grappled with her hearing loss.

Linking creativity

Inspired to nurture budding percussionists, she has always enjoyed working with students and relished her work at what is now known as the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (RCS). 'Years ago, when Martin Gibson and Pamela Dow were teaching at the RCS, they used to invite me into work with their students, and the masterclasses were always open to the public. It was lovely for people to watch the students grow and develop over the years. Like James Blades, they were keen for their students to be outward thinking, which appealed to me. I am also impressed with the younger generation setting up websites such as PercWorks, which allows students access to masterclasses and workshops with professionals.'

A keen supporter of organisations close to her childhood home in Aberdeen, it was announced in April 2021 that she would be taking on the role of chancellor at Aberdeen's Robert Gordon University (RGU). She chuckles when I ask whether she is looking to inspire the next generation of musicians – it is evident that she has big plans and, in true Glennie style, wants to get stuck in, have an impact and put RGU on the map. 'Robert Gordon has been traditionally known as an organisation for business, technical and medical courses. Yes, I want to champion the arts, but I am keen to link creativity to all the departments. Wellbeing is so important too. I want there to be excellent staff wellbeing as this feeds into the student experience.' What is clear is how much Glennie values communication, as she talks animatedly about what she calls 'the triangle'. 'What are so important are the three sides of the triangle: business, creativity and wellbeing. I am keen to work with the 11 faculties and see them communicate and work together to raise the profile of the University regionally, nationally and internationally.'

By her own admission, she has spent a lot of time breaking down barriers, and fighting for music education is one of them. In the early 2000s, there was very little money available to support basic activities or a thorough music education in state schools. Glennie, Julian Lloyd Webber, Sir James Galway, and Michael Kamen formed the 'Music in Education Consortium'. After persistent and successful lobbying, at the end of 2007, the UK government pledged no less than £332m for music education.

When I ask if she feels more needs to be done to support the arts subjects in schools in the face of a declining number of students studying music at A Level, I am met with a resounding 'Yes!' Glennie continues: 'The arts are so important to society, the economy, wellbeing, communication and communities. Music can bring together all these elements.'

As our interview comes to an end, it feels as if we have only scratched the surface of what truly drives the former Scotswoman of the Decade, but one thing is certain, James Blades' influence continues to guide her. She is undoubtedly a great percussionist, forward-thinking and a brilliant communicator, just like her mentor. **MT**

PHILIPP RATHMER

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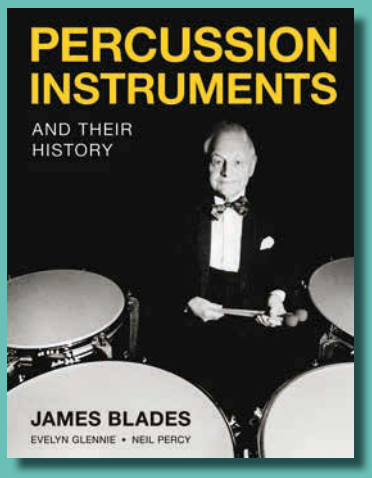

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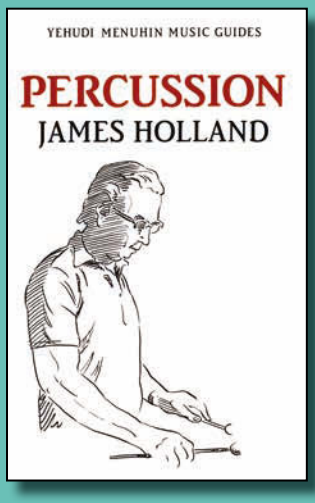

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She's on a drum roll

Fourteen-year-old Wilamena Dyer is already a highly accomplished musician. She also has Tourette's syndrome. Harriet Clifford speaks to Dyer and her percussion teacher, Jayne Obradovic, about learning music to an advanced level despite her disability

When Wilamena Dyer was nearing the end of her time at primary school, the tics she'd been experiencing since she was five became so debilitating that she couldn't get out of bed, walk, or eat on her own. Yet, most weeks, she would still attend her cello lesson. 'My parents would sit there,' Dyer explains, 'and it was the only chance I had to get this respite and this escape. That's when we noticed the amazing power that music had on my tics.'

Having played cello since around the age of five – also the age at which she first started making small involuntary facial movements – the 14-year-old musician now attends Wells Cathedral School where she has an equal study between cello and percussion. Her scholarship at the specialist music school is funded through the government's Music and Dance Scheme and she boards in Somerset away from her family – Dyer's Cornwall-based parents are both artists and her sister, who also went to Wells, is now at music college. Despite having only started playing percussion on arrival in Year 7, Dyer is currently preparing for upcoming Grade 8 exams in both her disciplines.

Fully immersed

She was inspired to audition by her sister, as well as by her 'supportive' and 'encouraging' music teachers. Dyer says: 'My sister is such an amazing musician and I've always looked up to her in that way. When it came to thinking about where I was going to go to secondary school, I thought, "Wouldn't it be cool if I could go where my sister went? I want to go to Wells." I first auditioned on cello, and I thought it would be amazing to get in, but I wasn't really expecting anything. Then I got my place and I've loved it ever since.' Dyer went to a small village primary school of only around 100 students where, she recalls, there was 'quite a lot of music'. She laughs: 'There were 30 violins – I was the only cellist. So, at the age of eight I joined a string orchestra for 16-year-olds and above, and there was little eight-year-old me not quite knowing what was going on but still enjoying it.'

Even through Zoom, Dyer is humble but quietly confident when she speaks, something I was fully expecting, having first seen her on the BBC website as one of two regional winners of this year's BBC Young Reporter competition, to which more than 2,500 11- to 18-year-olds submitted stories. In her video report entitled 'Tourette's, Music and Me', Dyer speaks to other musicians with the syndrome about their experiences, all of which are unique but have common threads. Most significantly, the interviewees speak about how their tics either stop completely or become imperceptible when they play. Now, I ask Dyer whether anything else has the same effect: 'I think for me, music is probably one of the main things because it's so immersive and you've got so many things going on. But there are a couple of other things – sometimes when I'm watching something and my brain is occupied. I've heard of lots of other people who have a passion and when they do it their brain is so focused that they don't tic.'

'I wanted to be the young person who was having a tough time sometimes, but showed how I use my music and make something great with it'

Tourette's syndrome has no cure and its causes are unknown, but it is common for tics to become less noticeable 'during activities involving a high level of concentration' (NHS), and having experienced this herself, Dyer wanted to find out more. 'I've always been interested in it as it's been such an important part of my life. I thought that there must be other people out there – it couldn't just be me who had discovered this!' The first time she realised this must be

▶ *Wilamena Dyer*

JOHN DYER

the case was when she arrived at Wells and met one of the general music assistants: 'He had Tourette's and was a percussionist, and it was great to see that role model. Now I've done lots of research and know that there have been famous people in the past – for example, Mozart was thought to have had Tourette's.'

Having been formally diagnosed with Tourette's syndrome at the age of nine, Dyer now runs a blog – 'TicTastic' – on which she aims to raise awareness of Tourette's and present an honest but uplifting portrayal of what it's like to grow up with the condition, particularly as a musician. As with her BBC report, one of the purposes of the fun, energetic videos she posts is to offer an alternative to widely accepted stereotypes. She says, 'Tourette's can be stigmatised a lot. As soon as you say, "I have Tourette's", people expect you to start shouting swearwords at them because that's what they know. That's all they've been told, therefore that's what they expect, so I'm really passionate about getting knowledge out there.' When she was first diagnosed, she struggled to find encouraging stories of young girls (Tourette's is more common in boys) living with the syndrome. Telling me why she initially created her blog, Dyer says: 'I think I wanted to be the young person, the young girl, who was having a tough time sometimes, but found positives and showed how I use my music and make something great with it.'

Musician first

Wells boasts the largest school percussion department in the UK. Jayne Obradovic, head of student experience and co-ordinator of percussion and summer schools, is Dyer's percussion teacher and has been living with her as a house parent this term. Joining the call, Obradovic is keen to caveat that, 'First and foremost, she's Wilamena the musician, who happens to have Tourette's.' She continues: 'The programmes you see on television are basically about the swearing side of Tourette's, so I knew very little about it. But I think Wilamena has guided us all, and I think schools are generally much better now at giving teachers – music teachers in particular – information.'

Obradovic – whose impressive teaching career has seen her pupils reach the percussion finals of BBC Young Musician, as well as go onto secure scholarships at music colleges and conservatoires – says, 'When children walk through the door, you don't know if they're neurodiverse or neurotypical and you kind of have to feel your way through it. Wilamena's blog and TV appearances have really helped us all as music teachers. But when she stands up and plays the marimba or sits down and plays the timps, we don't know, we don't notice it.' Obradovic says that living with Dyer has changed her approach to their music lessons because she has seen how much energy her student has to put into her playing. 'When she gets home, she's absolutely wiped. I've seen a different side to Wilamena's life in the last few months.' She adds: 'I'm just in awe of her, actually, how she copes with everything.'

Whether a conscious decision or not, controlling tics can be tiring. For Dyer, it's not something she'll be aware of until the end of the day. 'I'll never be sat in a lesson suppressing my tics on purpose, but naturally you're so focused – there

WELLS CATHEDRAL SCHOOL

◀ *Wilamena and Jayne in a percussion lesson at Wells*

are lots of things going on and you're making sure your technique and sound are good. But I've never felt I have to suppress anything or try and hold anything in because I'm very comfortable with my music teachers.'

Remove the fear

Although not every young person will feel comfortable talking openly about their physical or mental health, Obradovic stresses the importance of 'taking the fear out of teaching a neurodiverse child'. She continues: 'Obviously, do your research and make sure your school has given you the support and information, but I think it's about not being frightened to ask questions. The main piece of advice I would give is just not to fear whatever is going on in the child's life – just try and be part of it however you can help.' Dyer nods in agreement, before adding: 'Communication is really important. I'd much rather my music teacher had a conversation with me about how my week went, rather than have a really intense lesson and at the end of it I'd be really tired and not feel well enough.'

Dyer's final question is a poignant one: 'Music teachers are part of my life; why shouldn't they know what's going on in the rest of my life outside of that one hour in the practice room?' **MT**

'Tourette's, Music and Me' can be found on Wilamena's blog: **www.tictastic.com**
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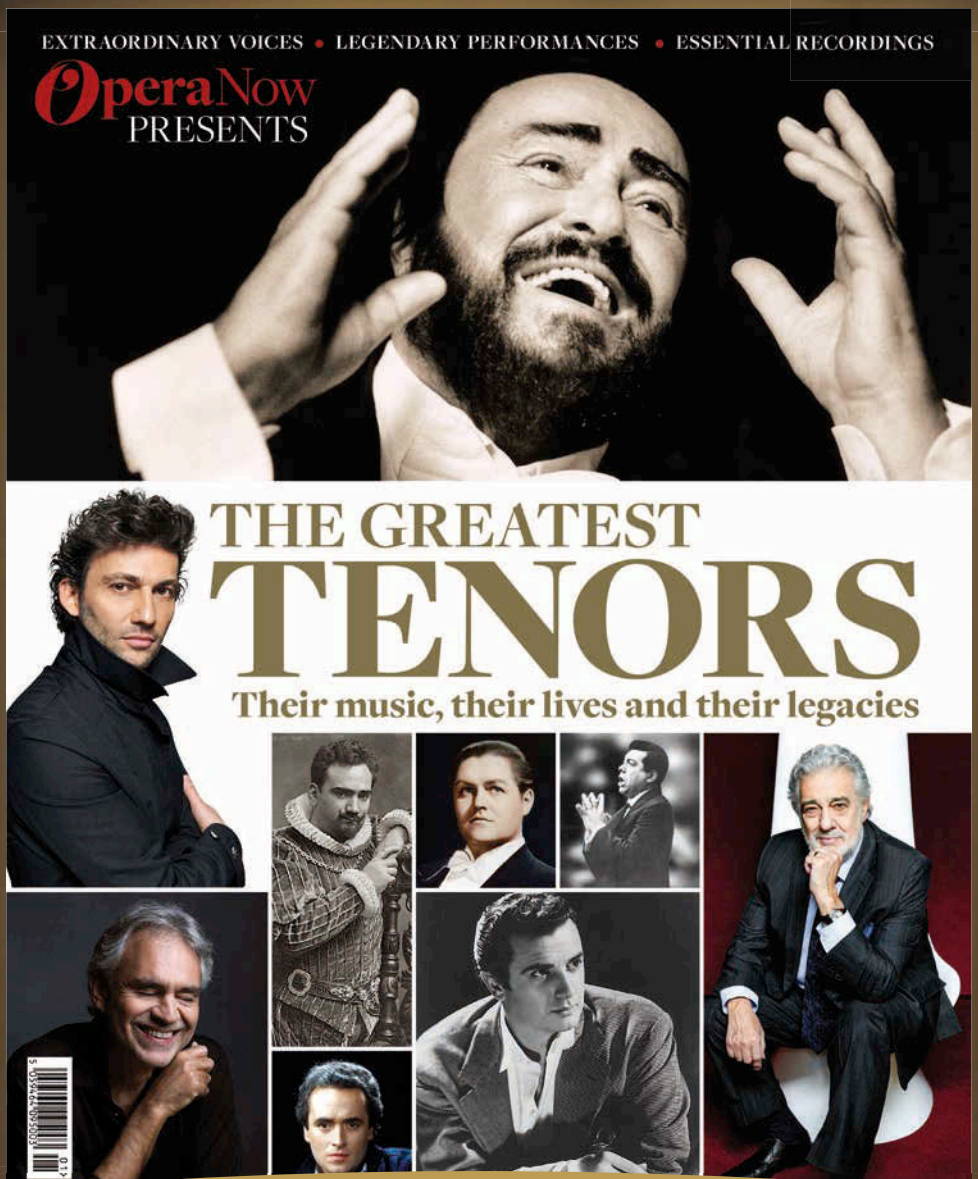
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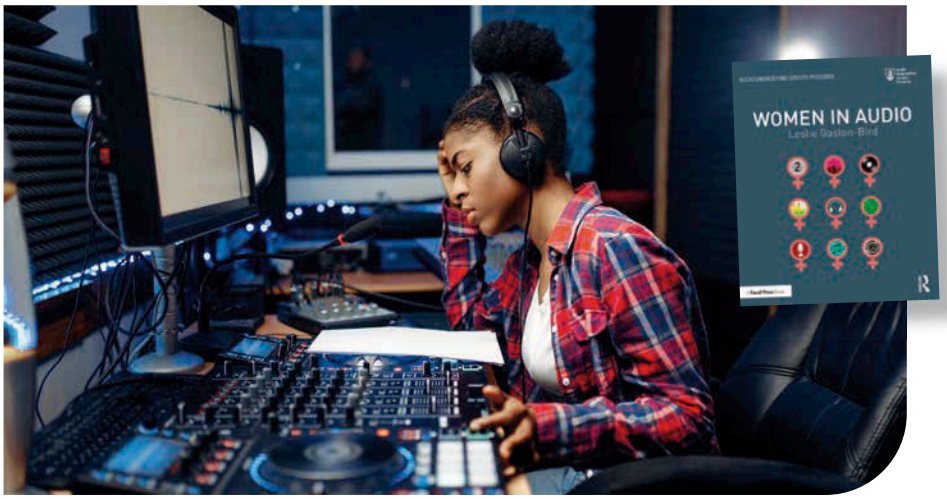
The gender imbalance in tech

In something a bit different this month, we hear from Leslie Gaston-Bird, audio engineer, author, and music production tutor at ICMP London, on the 'leaky pipeline' of women in music technology



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The notion that 'girls just aren't interested' in technology was dispelled in 2015 by Georgina Born et al. in their paper, *Music Technology, Gender, and Class: Digitization, Educational and Social Change in Britain*. 'The proportion of students aged five to 16 choosing "music technology" as their instrument is about 40 per cent female (sometimes more),' according to that paper. 'After age 16 this figure drops to 25 per cent, while among music technology A Level entries the fraction of young women is 18 per cent. And, finally, at university enrolment on music technology degrees, they represent approximately 10 per cent.' The authors call this a 'leaky pipeline'.

The Audio Engineering Society's 150th Convention was held from 25–28 May 2021. I curated two panel discussions with Carol Bousquet, former executive director of the Association of Loudspeaker Manufacturing & Acoustics. The panels were called 'Women in Audio: Project 2000, A Retrospective' and 'Women in Audio: Today's Leaders'.

We were interested in what kinds of gains have been made in terms of encouraging young girls and women to seek careers in audio engineering. We revisited work that began in 1995, when Bousquet launched Women in Audio: Project 2000. She recruited a high-profile list of academics and practitioners including psychologist Dr Catherine Steiner-Adair; Dr Isabel Carter Stewart, executive director of Girls, Inc.; recording artist Laurie Anderson; and educators Robin Coxe-Yeldham and Angela Piva to discuss girls' psychological development and the possible connection to the dearth of women in audio.

Bousquet and Anderson returned for the anniversary event, while newcomers included myself, Anderson's producer Roma Baran, who sits on the board of the Institute for Musical Arts (an all-girls music school in Massachusetts, USA), and Dr Stephanie Hull, the current director of Girls, Inc. Panelists listened to a clip from the original event, in which Steiner-Adair offered some sobering insight based on their extensive research into girls' development at the time:

'Girls do great... up until around the age of 10,' she said. 'Because up until the age of around eight or nine or 10, they are allowed to be honest about what goes on and what goes down in relationships. Girls at eight, nine and 10 talk all the time about anger, envy, jealousy, hatred, competition. They are loud, deep-belly-voiced young women. This capacity to speak vocally and in their body about anger, meanness, envy, competition – the inevitable, real, heartfelt, hard stuff that comes in real relationships – disappears by 15. Disappears. Girls come up against a cultural mandate written about by Carol Gilligan and Lynn Brand as the "tyranny of kind and nice". And it's at this moment in their lives that girls get the message – much more intensely than before – that they have to be kind and they have to be nice... and that it's much more important, in fact, to be kind and nice than it is to tell the truth. It's more important for your safety in the world.'

Terri Winston, founder and executive director of Women's Audio Mission, reacted to this clip. She felt that things were worse, or at best the same, for 'black and brown girls'. Her programme focuses on underserved populations in the San Francisco and Oakland regions of California, and she is heartbroken by the effect that economic deprivation has on young girls' self-confidence. What does encourage her is that girls participating in her programme find that confidence, and they are now training 3,000 girls every year. Winston also let viewers know that their oft-cited statistic that 'less than 5 per cent of women' are audio engineers came from the original Project 2000 event, which she attended. Joining Winston on the second panel were founders of women-centered mentoring organisations.

Mentoring, role models, and networking are all factors that contribute to the social capital needed for women to succeed in the field, as I concluded in my book, *Women in Audio*. This is supported by the scholarly research, interviews, and the academic conferences and panels mentioned above. In fact, Dr Elisabeth Dobson of the University of Huddersfield found over 70 'feminist audio collectives' currently supporting women and girls in the field of audio and music technology. Educators working with young people today are encouraged to collaborate with these groups in order to bring awareness to the career options that audio engineering provides, and to connect young girls to workshops and support networks. **MT**

Links

Dr Liz Dobson, Feminist Sound Collectives: **bit.ly/34rMDQM**
Women in Audio Project 2000: A Retrospective: **sched.co/jAJf**
Women in Audio Project 2000: Today's Leaders: **sched.co/jAyt**
Music Technology, Gender, and Class: Digitization, Educational and Social Change in Britain: **bit.ly/30ZJTnb**
Women in Audio, Leslie Gaston-Bird: **bit.ly/34tPJDQ**

The perils of percussionists

As a seasoned player herself, Anne Templer good-humouredly sets straight a few stereotypes about percussionists and provides some useful guidance for ensuring that all your young instrumentalists are equally supported in their playing

NATALYA LYS/ADOBESTOCK

It has often been assumed that percussionists are the most unmusical and least educated members of the musical diaspora, and that's putting it politely.

Personally, I have never particularly minded this label; for a start there is a grain of truth in it (I am yet to hear a percussionist discussing Schenkerian analysis, for example – somebody would probably punch them if they did). Percussionists are more likely to have been raised on funk grooves than Brahms, rock rhythms than Schubert. Their musical education is likely to have had depth, sure, but the very nature of all things you hit, scrape or shake will mean that they have to have a broader range of skills, are literally required to play more instruments, and will often have to wing it. A degree of improvisation has to be part of their DNA and their thinking requires speedy decisions rather than an in-depth exploration of the recapitulation.

Similar assumptions can also be made about selecting appropriate students to learn in the first place. I have often been asked to teach a child who is 'a bit of a handful,' 'not very bright' (though usually a more subtle form of words is found), or perhaps 'good at rhythm' which is often code for 'not very musical' (again, with appropriate linguistic vagueness).

The unmusical label is trickier to handle but is at least something you can shock people with. I have experienced far more examples of this than could possibly be listed here, but here are two passing but truthful illustrations:

Firstly, in my questioning the interval of a tri-tone at a rehearsal my (wind-playing) colleague was stunned into silence. Pleasingly, he had the presence of mind to make a joke of it: 'A percussionist with an ear – how dare you!'

The second was with a dreadful conductor who, when questioned by me over the second violins persistently playing wrong accidentals in the middle of a texture, had no response at all, except for 'err...' and a hasty retreat. I wasn't being deliberately malevolent – just irritated at the sloppiness and was struggling to tune the timps because of it. Actually, malevolence with a sniff of irony can be really funny and, taken with the right spirit, can be really bonding for a team of players. It *is* true that percussionists can often be the type of musicians who enjoy jokey banter or get bored easily (guilty as charged) or don't necessarily 'settle' very well on other instruments. But I prefer to think of them as musically diverse, rather than suffering from poor concentration or a lack of creative instinct.

'Dangerous precedents'

My point is that there can be terribly lazy assumptions about percussionists. All too often I have seen musical directors stand at the front and say, 'I know nothing about percussion' – not with embarrassment, but with *pride*. The trouble with such ignorance is that crazy expectations are made of the players; you can't start a rehearsal in a 'tutti' section with percussionists on several different instruments if they haven't yet worked out the distribution of parts, sticks, instruments and hadn't been told of the repertoire beforehand, for example. Being told to 'sort yourselves out' – particularly when it comes to children – is not only unhelpful, but also sets some dangerous precedents.

Consider, for example, the conductor who implies that the 'loudest' child should play the kit or the snare drum. Where does that leave us? Potentially with the most confident personality – but not necessarily the best player – thrashing around. Also, gender stereotypes continue to persist. There remain too many examples of girls being pushed to the tuned percussion parts and left there. This can occasionally be dressed up as, 'she is the tuned specialist,' but is essentially unfair and sloppy decision making.

Ideally, instruments should be rotated, but also players shouldn't necessarily be allowed to get away with saying

they 'can't' play something. Students can be encouraged to challenge themselves and look to widen their boundaries. If there is a simple glockenspiel part, for example, anyone can play it and an alternative student who wouldn't otherwise have the chance can attempt the snare drum or kit part.

Next steps

As the need to embrace percussion in most ensembles is almost inescapable, here are some suggestions for navigating this mysterious world:

- If you are not a percussionist and are intimidated by the thought of handing out tips to students, try and get some advice from a colleague. It is impossible to know everything about every instrument and continuing to exchange musical information is always useful.
- If you are conducting a wind band, it is likely that there will be lots of percussion parts, so decide which are your priority. A lot of education-based arrangements have extra 'padding' for those ensembles who are in the happy position of having multiple players.
- Try and avoid putting a child who has never had a percussion lesson in the section. The result can often be humiliation for the child and an instrument incorrectly played, resulting occasionally in damage to the instrument and often frustration all round. There are, of course, exceptions to this; as a percussion coach, I have from time to time been asked to accommodate pianists or guitarists, which – if they can read – is doable. Bear in mind that this is because they can be guided by someone who has expertise and the students themselves are able to follow the score. Try and do this sparingly; I have been asked to find parts for up to eight non-percussionists before – all at once.
- Understand that the parts will almost certainly not be presented in the form of a percussion 'score,' so if someone is looking at, say, a snare drum part, they are unlikely to be aware of what is going on in the tuned percussion.
- Remember that percussionists are essentially soloists; if they go wrong, it is likely to be visible and audible, so try to be kind.
- While there is increasing agreement on how to write percussion parts for all the instruments, not all manuscript is the same. Snare drum parts, for example, are meant to be written on the third space up on the stave, but I have seen them all over the place. Some are frankly appalling. Be prepared to edit ruthlessly.
- Encourage your players to work as a team. This is not the same as one person hogging all the exciting instruments, but may involve a sensible distribution of parts, playing to their strengths with an eye on stretching them a little.
- Drum kit parts are often unnecessarily complicated and can usually be simplified down to a straightforward groove, punctuated with appropriate fills. It's worth talking to a drummer about this, and also having an idea of the feel of a piece. Is it a pop ballad? Is it a Latin piece? Is it a march? If there are multiple tempo and stylistic changes, then the conductor needs to be very clear about this.

Percussionists are essentially soloists; if they go wrong, it is likely to be visible and audible, so try to be kind

- If more 'serious' symphonic repertoire is being rehearsed, there is a chance that percussionists will have ample free time. I always advise students that this is the nature of the beast. Equally, however, it is helpful if directors plan rehearsals carefully. A useful hint is to tell players the order before starting the rehearsal so that appropriate setting up and organisation can take place.
- Be mindful of the fact that percussionists are rarely, if ever, playing their own instruments. In some instances, the differences between models are stark; timpani for example can be tuned in a multitude of different ways depending on the mechanism. Once again, students have to get used to this, but may need some time to adapt.

Finally, I recognise that we are in the real world here, and time and resources are stretched. Much of what has been written above is in an ideal scenario, but nevertheless requires consideration and planning. Adding well-rehearsed and sensitive percussion can really lift an ensemble to a much more exciting level. And don't forget – audiences love it. **MT**

LÉO PREVITALI/ADOBESTOCK

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Fear and tremolo

You probably spend most of your time trying to *remove* the fear-factor when it comes to composing with your GCSE and A Level students. Kostis Tsioulakis has other (creative) ideas...

In most scary films and TV series, music plays a quintessential role, without which, the audience's experience would be very different. In all genres – comedy, drama, romantic, adventure, horror etc. – music has a very particular role in supporting the story, helping with plot gaps, enriching the atmosphere, and drawing the audience's focus to particular things, characters, or situations. But what is it that makes a musical composition funny, dramatic, romantic, sad, adventurous, or even scary? In this article we'll be analysing the latter.

The unknown and the unworldly

There are two inclusive categories of situations that usually scare us the most, regardless of our age and gender, cultural background or ethnicity; I like to name them 'the unknown' and 'the unworldly'. Their main difference is that with the unknown, we have no idea what it is, so we usually let our imagination fill the missing image, whereas the unworldly is something that we thought we knew but, in this instance, it appears with a heavily unfamiliar, distorted, or even unrecognisable form.

In a quick example, I like to parallelise the unknown with a completely dark room; we know that it is not empty because with every step we take we hear different noises, however we have no idea what might this be. The unworldly, on the other hand, is a room fully lit, full of things that we recognise but that are presented in an unusual way: imagine you walk into a room that is fully and normally furnished only to realise moments later that you are actually standing on its ceiling and everything is hanging from up high, including yourself. Creepy, right?

But, musically speaking, how do we recreate all that stuff using notes? It might be easier than we think, as long as we ask ourselves the right questions.

GCSE and A Level film music

While the four examination boards (Edexcel, AQA, OCR and Eduqas) offer a variety of composing brief options, in my experience the film/TV briefs are probably the most popular. This is likely to be due to our relationship with the medium, which is usually more intimate than with contemporary composing. Although slightly different, all exam boards base their briefs on a storyline and then ask the composer to compose a piece from the director's

'point of view'. Therefore, it is important to ask the right questions before starting to compose, e.g. Why does this story need music? How high in the hierarchy is the soundtrack in this scene? What is the intended atmosphere? Is the music's role to hide/cover something or to reveal/emphasise it? These are only the starting points of the research we need to do before we begin composing, and even while writing the student may want to revisit them to make sure they are still composing the same piece they had initially started. There are many more practical questions which we will address below, mainly to do with the composition itself, including the soundscapes, timbre, texture and structure of the composition.

The orchestra

The classical symphony orchestra as a medium is usually our first thought. For sure, it offers a huge variety of timbres, pitch ranges and textures, and is therefore a safe go-to solution. However, many composers might want to explore different instrumental choices, from percussion and harps originating in parts of Africa, to south American plucked string instruments, and from Mediterranean wind instruments to Middle Eastern vocals (often sampled). The advantage of utilising some of these instruments is the relative – or absolute – unfamiliarity many people have with their sounds. (Imagine the eeriness of an echoey, atonal melody on a kora combined with some thin, high-pitched Mediterranean tambourine *tremolo*!).

Synths and sound designing

Electronic instruments are often the 'usual suspects' of a scary soundtrack. At this point we have to make clear that when we are talking about 'scary music' we do not usually include 'jumpy' scenes. There is an infinite number of ways you can make the audience jump off their seats and, usually, this is the job of the sound designer. Although our job as composers is to prepare the ground for this 'jump', usually these kinds of scenes have very little to do with music. In this article, when we talk about scary music, we mean purely musical ways to set a scary/creepy atmosphere within which the story will flourish and thrive. Electronic instruments and synthesisers are really good for sharp sudden sounds as well as producing very unfamiliar and mysterious timbres.

Harmony

Particular modes have a quality that could potentially be very dark and unusual. Phrygian and Locrian, due to their rare start with semitones, are the best candidates. They also offer a convenient foreground for some nice chords, such as diminished, minor with flatted 5th or 9th etc. Another nice harmonic context is the 12-note system, which is my absolute favourite for scary/dark composing (Eliot Carter's string quartets will give you a clear sound of this), while quartal and quintal harmony (e.g. *One Summer's Day* by Joe Hisaishi), and Octachords (Oliver Messiaen's *Catalogue d'oiseaux* and *Chronochromie* are some representative examples) offer some useful palettes. The main characteristic which all the above have in common is the absence of absolute tonality. This provides flexibility and helps build tension.

Rhythms

It is also suggested that we utilise odd measures (Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* is a representative example of this), so that it allows us to build more complex and unusual melodies. We can also explore added rhythms (Bartók's *String Quartets No1–3* are worth listening and reading for this study) and transform a simple melody into something more mysterious and unfamiliar. Also creating a free pulse piece is a valuable tool for building a dark atmosphere (Hildur Guðnadóttir's *Joker* and *Chernobyl* soundtracks are almost a 'masterclass' in this tool).

Instrumental extended techniques

Some of the most common orchestral instruments have the most uncommon and eerie sounding techniques. **Woodwind**: explore flutter and whistle tones. **Brass**: a variety of mutes and singing through the instrument. **Piano and percussion**: mute with hands, use fingers directly on instrument or use different materials to mute, such as paper, pieces of cloth etc. Some percussion instruments can also be bowed, like cymbals, vibraphone, marimba and so on. **Strings**: Try *Sul Ponticello* combined with *tremolo*. Some will say it is quite cliché, but it is an invaluable tool. Also, *Col Legno Battuto* produces an amazing effect – however if you are not using sample libraries, it might take a lot of convincing your performers to strike their strings with the back of their bow!

These are only a small sample of the extended

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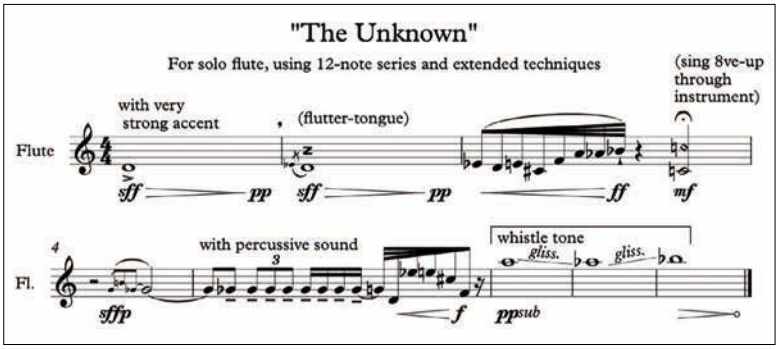
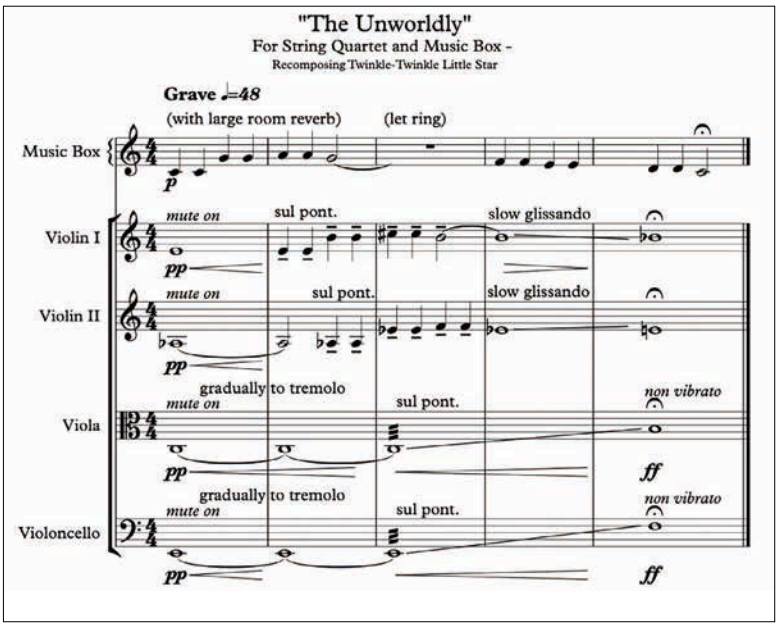


▲ *Example 1: 'The Unknown' for solo flute, using 12-note series and extended techniques*



▲ *Example 2: 'The Unworldly' for string quartet and music box – recomposing Twinkle-Twinkle Little Star*

techniques that are out there or can be invented to produce the sounds you have in mind.

Here are a few exercises to which your students can start applying the above, as well as their own ideas:

Challenge 1. The Unknown

A) Create a melodic sequence/main theme that will be gradually moving further away from tonal/diatonic perception. It could be using the 12-note system, or another technique that may keep a safe distance from triadic harmony.

B) If the melody is purely monophonic, start thinking of the instrument that would depict best the scary mood you have in mind. Is it more ghostly (flute or clarinet?) or mysterious (oboe, bassoon, English Horn?) or maybe creepy (piano, strings?). These are only a few ideas and examples. If your theme is polyphonic, then either think of instruments that can play many notes at the same time, or small ensembles. What extended techniques do your instruments have? Can you affect the instruments' sound in a way that sounds unusual or unrecognisable? Be inventive and openminded. Explore your options. It may well be that these techniques will alter your initial idea; that is fine. As composers we must learn early on to not 'get married' to our ideas too soon.

Challenge 2. The Unworldly

A) Take a well-known melody, preferably non-scary (maybe even a nursery rhyme). Record it on your DAW and then start experimenting with harmony. Think outside the box and try reharmonising to a degree that some people would find dissonant. Try different instruments with a variety of pitch ranges and timbral differences. See what works best in making this creepy and unfamiliar.

Challenge 3. The Story

Develop a miniature piece based on a story line. You can make up your own story or get inspired by something you watched or read recently. How will your music help the plot develop, emphasising the scariness of it? Use the techniques learned in challenges 1 or 2. Ask the right questions: When you listen to the piece, does the imaginary scene 'come to life'? Are you illustrating the right atmosphere? How could you develop this into a longer piece?

I hope the suggestions above can provide some useful material to encourage creativity and inspire composition students. Below are a few examples of the techniques mentioned above, as well as some listening suggestions. MT

Music notation examples:

- Patterns with the use of added rhythm
- Eerie melody with extended techniques in Phrygian mode
- Reharmonising simple, well-known melodies

Suggested listening:

Concert Music

Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima, Penderecki
Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta, Bartók
The Rite of Spring ('Dance of the Young Girls'), Stravinsky
Quatuor pour la fin du temps, Messiaen

Film Music

Joker (Original Soundtrack) and *Chernobyl* (O.S.T.), Guðnadóttir
Psycho (O.S.T.) and *Vertigo* (O.S.T.), Hermann
Lost (TV Series) (O.S.T.), Giacchino

Footnotes

1 Meaning all 12 notes are equal, therefore there is no dominant. Similar to Serialism, but without the absolute need to keep the notes in a specific order.
2 Chords are being built upon perfect 4ths and 5ths rather than 3rds.
3 Chords with eight different notes, usually including several chromatic clashes among them.
4 Repeating a particular pattern but with an added element at the end, which alters the rhythmic pulse.
5 Suggested reading: ADLER, S. (2002). *The study of orchestration*.

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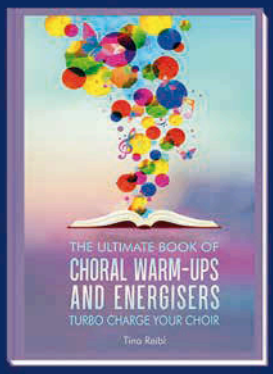

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Paving the way

KIRSTEN MCTERNAN

The BMus at Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama has had a transformative facelift for 2022 entry, courtesy of course leader Andrea Jones and recently appointed director of music Tim Rhys-Evans. Claire Jackson meets the latter for a sneak preview

▲ *Tim Rhys-Evans*

Tim Rhys-Evans has had a busy year. Having joined Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama (RWCMD) as its new director of music last April – two weeks into lockdown – the singer was tasked with overhauling the institution's popular BMus (Hons) course. The degree has just received official validation and Rhys-Evans couldn't be happier. 'Rewriting it has been an enormous undertaking,' he smiles. 'We've been consulting with staff and students – and our industry partners – at every stage.' Around 120 students will be admitted into the 2022 cohort, where the course will have a closer focus on real-life musicianship as well as digital skills. 'There has previously been a subtext that everyone in a conservatoire was training to be a soloist, and, if you fell off the treadmill, you'd do something else,' says Rhys-Evans. 'Clearly there are many career possibilities besides being a soloist; we want to give community music making, teaching and all the other aspects of music equal billing with solo performance.'

Rhys-Evans is well placed to provide an on-the-ground perspective: in 2000 he founded choral group Only Men Aloud and led them to victory in BBC's 2008 competition *Last Choir Standing*. He later set up the Aloud Charity, which runs Only Boys Aloud and Only Kids Aloud, promoting the Welsh choral tradition and supporting young musicians. Rhys-Evans is also a renowned conductor (working with the National Youth Choir of Wales) and opera specialist (music director of both Welsh National Youth Opera and Youth Opera Northern Ireland, and has also served as the associate chorus master for Welsh National Opera). As an MA graduate and former vocal studies tutor, Rhys-Evans brought his own conservatoire experience to bear on the course rewrite.

'I had to learn on the job,' he says, reflecting on his preparation for the world of work as a 21st-century portfolio musician. 'I wish there had been more in my own education to help me understand what was ahead.' Born in New Tredegar, South Wales, Rhys-Evans began playing the piano at five. As a teenager, he joined Mid-Glamorgan Youth Choir before studying music at Cardiff University, followed by a Masters degree in performance at RWCMD. 'I come from an ex-mining community where higher education opportunities were rare,' he explains, 'It's a major passion of mine to make sure that there is a pathway into the conservatoire for people from all types of background.'

Embracing digital

There are three main elements to the new BMus: musical language and technique; ensemble and collaborative artistry; and the musician in society. Rhys-Evans shows me a diagram of these themes depicted within interlocking circles, indicating that each has equal weight and all are connected. By 'shows me', I mean shares an image on screen: we are talking via Zoom, of course, as is now customary. Before the pandemic, like most people, only a small percentage of my own meetings took place online. Activities at RWCMD were, as you would expect, nearly always delivered in person. Transactions have had to evolve quickly, and rewriting the course has allowed Rhys-Evans to ensure that future students are well prepared for remote music making.

'We've sharpened our digital strategy,' he explains. 'It's something I think that many of us have been thinking about on a personal development basis for some time. Obviously the pandemic has forced rapid up-skilling. The digital side of music has traditionally been associated with music technology or composing. Recent events have helped us to review that position. Students have to be able to film and edit, and undertake a variety of tasks.'

Future ways of working remain in flux, as many businesses adopt a permanent 'work from home' set-up in the face of ever-changing government policy. While we hope that the worst is behind us, it's important that students are well prepared for different work and study environments – and that their skills (often of a higher quality than many of the teaching staff) are formally recognised. Adaptability is key, and the new degree seeks to prepare musicians for the realities of life in an

increasingly precarious industry. (The latest survey by the Incorporated Society of Musicians reveals the devastating impact the Brexit trade deal has had on the sector, with 79 per cent of businesses admitting they were 'concerned' or 'very concerned' about the future of their business over the next 12 to 24 months.) Rhys-Evans is aware that this preparation may be daunting for some students, many of whom will be experiencing the 'little fish in a big pond' feeling in their first year.

'The format of the degree is like a hairpin,' he says, 'When students arrive, they go through an induction that helps them explore who they are as artists and people. Gradually, over the second year, the idea is they find new opportunities both with direction from the staff and on their own. By the third year they mould their own journey. There's greater flexibility with one-to-one provision in the last years to allow for specialisation.' The importance of a musician's wellbeing is highlighted throughout the course, with mental health a priority. This is something that Rhys-Evans feels passionately about, having contributed to the BBC documentary series *All in the Mind*, which won a BAFTA Cymru Award for Best Documentary.

Collaborative approach

The new BMus also makes the most of RWCMD's enviable industry connections. Rhys-Evans describes Cardiff as 'a big village' and has worked with the conservatoire to build on historic collaboration. The institution has partnerships with the Welsh National Opera and the BBC National Orchestra of Wales (BBC NOW), as well as community groups and music services. (BBC NOW runs an online mentoring scheme for RWCMD musicians and members of the National Youth Orchestra of Wales; there are some great videos under #BBCNOWMentors). There is an expectation that students will immerse themselves in real-life settings from their first year, such as working with visiting chamber ensembles and interacting with schools. Rhys-Evans also intends to build on the existing relationship between RWCMD and the Aloud charity, of which he is now a patron. (He is also a vice president of the homeless charity Shelter Cymru and a trustee of The Darkley Trust, working with the arts and homeless charities within Wales. In 2013 he was awarded an MBE for services to music and for charitable services.)

The revitalised qualification encourages students to work with each other: 'Collaboration happens already, of course, and these projects are often those that students

RWCMD

KIRSTEN MCTERNAN

'We want to give community music making, teaching and all the other aspects of music equal billing with solo performance'

are most proud of,' says Rhys-Evans. 'We wanted to bring this work into the assessment calendar. It was also a way to address the hierarchical system that sometimes exists in classical music where the soloist is at the top and everyone else is below. Being a collaborative musician requires just as much musicianship.'

Not every institution could offer such a ground-breaking course, but RWCMD has long demonstrated that it is not afraid of change. The conservatoire has undergone intense development over the past decades, receiving its royal title in 2002, as part of the Jubilee commemorations. The site itself has also improved, with two new performance venues (Richard Burton Theatre and Dora Stoutzker Hall), a new front of house area and rehearsal studios added in 2011. RWCMD was the first of the five conservatoires to receive an 'All-Steinway' status – meaning that the College has a significant fleet of the premier pianos: 62 brand-new instruments were delivered in 2009, including 19 grand pianos and a model D concert grand. Another 24 were delivered in 2020 so that now every acoustic piano at RWCMD is a Steinway, making it Europe's first 'Steinway Exclusive Conservatoire'.

'We'll be bringing in further changes in 2023,' reveals Rhys-Evans, 'It's about keeping relevant to the industry.' These amendments involve integrating music technology more deeply into teaching and ensuring that jazz is on an equal footing with classical. The three core elements – artistry, collaboration and society – will remain at the heart of the course. 'I believe so passionately in this qualification,' concludes Rhys-Evans, 'It sounds cheesy but teaching music is one of the most important jobs there is.' A sentiment shared by all here at *MT*. MT

www.rwcmd.ac.uk

▲ *24 Steinways were delivered to the College last Sept, making it the first 'Steinway Exclusive Conservatoire' in Europe*

◀ *Manchester Collective workshop at RWCMD*

In practical terms

Keen to raise awareness of a lesser-known ABRSM pre-requisite exam, Rachael Gillham introduces an option that requires quick thinking and impressive musicality

ADOBE STOCK / TEROVESALAINEN

ABRSM is unique among the exam boards in requiring students to achieve a pre-requisite exam before being able to move to the higher grades, namely grades 6, 7 and 8. The go-to that most teachers teach and enter their pupils for is Grade 5 Theory. In this exam, pupils are expected to demonstrate their knowledge of major and minor keys and scales up to six sharps and flats, tenor clef, notation, transposition, intervals, cadences, and terms, including those in German. It is sadly not well known or advertised that pupils may offer alternatives to this with either Grade 5 Jazz on a solo instrument, or Grade 5 Practical Musicianship. I want to discuss the latter.

What does the exam entail?

ABRSM's website explains: 'Practical Musicianship exams encourage interconnected development of musical listening, reading and playing skills through a holistic approach.' The assessed exercises include singing and playing from memory, improvising, transposing, sight reading, and interpreting music heard while looking at the printed score. The exam consists of six exercises:

- In Exercise A, the candidate is asked to sing a four-bar melody heard twice. The melody is then given a third time and the candidate plays it on their instrument.
- In Exercise B, the candidate may choose whether to either transpose at sight a four-bar melody up or down a tone or semitone, or alternatively sing the lower part of a four-bar phrase.
- Exercise C is sight reading a melody and includes realisation of ornamentation, dynamics, and expression.
- Exercise D consists of either improvising a keyboard accompaniment or a melody over given chords. These may be played either solo or the examiner will play the other part. In both, keys are of no more than two sharps or flats and the candidate is given a couple of bars lead in and expected to continue in the same style. The harmonic structure is confined to chords of the tonic, subdominant, dominant and supertonic. Using inversions effectively gets bonus points here.
- Exercise E is improvising on a given motif. Candidates are expected to play for up to a minute.
- In F, candidates are given a score in which the examiner will play and make five mistakes in rhythm, pitch, articulation, tempo, and phrasing. The candidate is expected to show where the mistakes were and explain the difference.

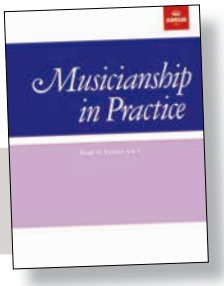
What do you need to know?

First impressions might lead teachers and pupils to think that this is an easier option than Grade 5 Theory. I would agree that it is much less academic. However, all my pupils have found the improvisation by far the trickiest part of the exam. Fear of the unknown and years of relying on the music in front of you can combine to instil a jolt of adrenaline. As someone who dislikes an empty music stand, I sympathise. I took lessons in improvising as a ballet pianist a few years ago and the two most important bits of advice I take from that to pupils is 1) Have a structure, however loose. You need a beginning, a middle and an end, and 2) If you can't think of a melody, have a good rhythmic idea, and repeat it while you get back on track!

On the whole, while Grade 5 Theory requires more musical knowledge, candidates have far longer to answer the questions. The alternative is done 'on the fly', and pupils do not get a second chance at some of the exercises. I asked my Godson (thank you, Felix!) to do a run through with me. He took Grade 5 Theory last year and has never seen this syllabus before. As a chorister and playing his instruments to between Grade 4 and Grade 6 level, he is a well-rounded musician. He enjoyed the active participation but found both improvising tests a challenge. That said, it is fun, and builds on pupils innate listening and theoretical knowledge.

Pupils often tell me that the examiners comment on how much they enjoy taking the exam, as it is not something they get to do often. I have asked a few examiners I know, and they said how lovely it is to see young musicians taking the exam and how their musicality always shines through.

ABRSM publishes the entire Practical Musicianship syllabus in three books. Whether pupils take the exam or not, they are indispensable in building transferable skills in all other aspects of playing an instrument and developing well-rounded musicians. **MT**



gb.abrsm.org/en/our-exams/other-assessments/practical-musicianship

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MA EDUCATION
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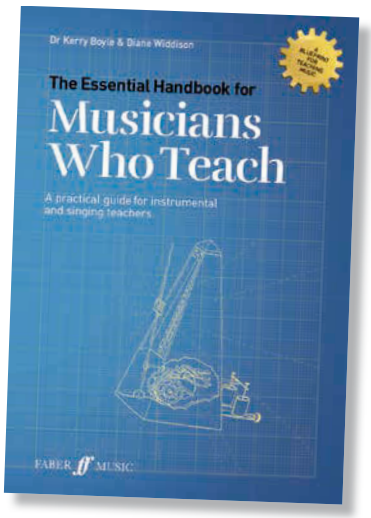
The Essential Handbook for Musicians Who Teach


Dr Kerry Boyle & Diane Widdison
The Essential Handbook for
Musicians Who Teach
A practical guide for instrumental and singing teachers
FABER MUSIC

Musicians who teach can often end up feeling unsupported. The MU's Chris Walters takes a look at a new book that promises to be the ultimate guide to instrumental or vocal teaching

Musicians come to instrumental or vocal teaching through a variety of routes. Some start teaching when they are students, while others begin later, perhaps having previously worked in performing or in other professions entirely. Unlike classroom music teachers, who usually have a degree in music as well as a teaching qualification, it is unusual for them to complete initial training or take teaching qualifications. What usually unites musicians who teach is a process of learning their craft as they go, which can lead to a huge variety of different approaches and outcomes.

Filling in the gaps

Musicians who teach can face considerable challenges, and they are often under-supported in these. Professional musicians have significant knowledge about playing their instruments, but they may lack opportunities to develop teaching skills or an understanding of how students learn. Despite this, they are still expected to hit the ground running and deliver high-quality teaching when engaged by schools or Music Education Hubs. Additionally, they can be under-supported in learning what is required of them when entering schools or other regulated settings.

A new book from Faber Music, *The Essential Handbook for Musicians Who Teach*, seeks to offer advice and guidance on these topics and more. Written by Diane Widdison and Dr Kerry Boyle, the book is welcomed by the Musicians' Union as a valuable source of information for MU members and any musician who finds themself teaching.

A valuable source of information for MU members and any musician who finds themself teaching

Crucial topics

The book begins with an examination of the profile and identity of instrumental and vocal teachers, expanding on some of the issues touched on above. This leads to a discussion about the settings and workplaces that music educators need to be aware of, with information on the protocols that apply in each setting.

A chapter on business considerations covers issues that are common sticking points for musicians who teach: contracts and employment status. Many music teachers have no written agreements in place with the schools where they work, while others sign questionable self-employed contracts that are in fact closer to employment. Contract issues can lead to a range of problems, from a lack of job security to missing out on employment benefits that teachers should be entitled to. The information in this chapter should help teachers avoid these pitfalls.

There is also a chapter on what good teaching looks like. Most instrumental and vocal teachers will relate to the experience of teaching in the way that they were themselves taught, which works better in some contexts than others. Here, teachers are inspired to raise the bar and teach in a way that works for all students, which may mean deviating from a default way of doing things and switching up the approach from student to student. Planning and long-term progress are covered, along with lesson structure and some well-established pedagogical approaches. These principles may not be new to experienced teachers, but they are essential for those just starting out and will be useful for anyone looking to refresh their teaching.

Safeguarding has its own chapter, which considers how best to protect the children and young people who pass through a teacher's studio. It also looks at how teachers can protect themselves by avoiding behaviour that could be interpreted ambiguously, and by always maintaining the highest professional standards.

Health and wellbeing are also areas of relevance to music teachers, who introduce their students to ways of playing that will lead to the formation of habits. Habits can be positive or negative, and the book helps promote the former by explaining musculoskeletal health, posture, mental health, performance anxiety and hearing health. The book concludes with suggestions for ongoing professional development.

The authors

The authors are specialists in the field of music education. Dr Kerry Boyle is a singing teacher, choral director, researcher, and lecturer. She trained as a classical singer before specialising in education and has experience in a range of professional contexts including schools, colleges, universities, and music services.

Diane Widdison was a professional flautist, instrumental teacher, conductor, and manager before joining the staff of the Musicians' Union in 2006. As national organiser for education and training until December 2020, she focused on supporting musicians who teach by introducing a range of benefits and services related to their work.

The Musicians' Union continues to support teachers with all the issues discussed in the book, and we encourage you to visit our website below to find out more. MT

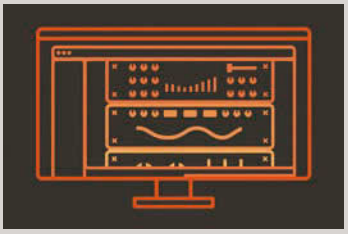
www.themu.org
You can join the MU for £1 for the first six months. MU members can purchase this book and other Faber Music publications at a 20% discount.

New in music technology

MT's tech editor **Tim Hallas** reveals what's new this month

Reason 12

Price: TBC



Reason Studios (formerly Propellerheads) has announced the latest version of its flagship software – also known as Reason. At one point, Reason could be found in schools and colleges up and down the country due to its excellent selection of instruments and easy-to-understand interface. The ability to now use it as a plugin within another DAW means it's back on my regular software list.

The key new features that are expected are an entirely new sampler (the current samplers are quite complicated), an overhaul of the graphics, and a complete update to the Combinator instrument. For those who don't know, the Combinator allows users to group devices together in one 'instrument' and play them all simultaneously. It's a very powerful tool, so an update to this is exciting. Expect a full review at launch.

▶ **www.reasonstudios.com**

Party Mix II and Party Mix Live

Price: £90 and £125

Numark has updated its entry-level DJ controllers with the Party Mix II and the Party Mix Live. The key difference between the two is the inclusion of built-in speakers in the Live model. Both models feature two large platters for scratching, jogging between tracks, and other tasks in which a wheel is helpful. Both devices include a crossfader, basic EQ and effects, and a really cheesy light show!

I have the original version of this and use it regularly in lessons involving DJ skills or the history of hip hop. It's quite a cheap unit – and this is reflected in the materials it's made from – but it's a really great teaching tool. The latest version includes compatibility with a wide range of DJ software and it integrates with a wide range of streaming platforms. Just remember to turn the light show off in class!

▶ **www.numark.com**

smart:EQ 3

Price: €129

Pigments is the flagship synthesiser from French software and hardware manufacturers Arturia. Arturia is best known in the software world for its faithful software recreations of famous electronic instruments from the past. However, the team also make their own synths that draw on that knowledge and then add something more. Pigments is their own take on the best bits from every synth in the world.

Version 3 incorporates something called Additive synthesis in addition to all the forms of synthesis available (subtractive, wavetable and FM) that Pigments could already do. There are additional new effects including the legendary Roland Chorus sound. This is a very powerful synth and not for the casual user – but for Level 3 students looking to explore electronic music, this could be perfect.

▶ **www.arturia.com**

Axino Synergy Core

Price: €399/$399

Antelope Audio is a high-end audio company which, unless you're into music tech as much as I am, you're unlikely to have come across. However, its latest product, the terribly-named Axino Synergy Core (it sounds like middle-manager speak) has some nice features that could be of interest to the education market.

USB mics are nothing new, but the Axino combines a very high-quality mic with an audio interface capable of 24-bit/192kHz conversion. But its biggest trick is the ability to emulate a range of other hardware in post-processing. It can emulate Neumann U87 microphones, apply emulations of Neve 1073 preamps and 1176 compressors. This mic could be great for capturing performers simply, but without compromising on quality, and could be perfect for remote sessions when you don't have access to a studio.

▶ **www.antelopeaudio.com**

Meet the speaker: Leonora Davies

The Music & Drama Education Expo | London is taking place on 24 and 25 September 2021. With free registration now open and the exciting programme launched, Harriet Clifford meets Leonora Davies MBE, who is speaking on Saturday morning

HC: What has your career looked like since becoming a freelance music education consultant?

LD: When I first finished my full-time job in Haringey, I did a lot of work for Youth Music on the whole-class instrumental scheme, and I've been a mentor for Music for Youth for many years and I've really enjoyed my work there. Of course, that's fallen by the way considerably over the last 15 months, but I've kept in touch with them. I particularly loved going down to South Wales to Bridgend, and also to Aldeburgh. There was something very grand about sitting in the Maltings and having these wonderful young musicians play to you – it was a real privilege. I've also always kept in touch with Haringey, where I was the music inspector for many years. I always went to their concerts and supported them and was able to offer any advice that they might need from an old person!

In around 2010 I worked with a small group and secured some funding from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation to undertake a programme called Musical Bridges, which was about transition of pupils from Year 6 to Year 7. We not only worked with music teachers in primary and secondary schools, but also with headteachers and senior management teams, particularly in secondary schools. It was really thrilling because it was quite innovative. We knew that in music a lot of pupils transferring to secondary school fell under the radar because they weren't being picked up in a systematic way.

It was evaluated by colleagues from Sussex University, and we felt that we had at least sown some seeds. In practical terms, we ran a number of courses for primary and secondary teachers so they could learn from each other. This resulted in a number of initiatives: Year 6 children would be invited to visit the neighbouring secondary school for a day, they would get to know the music teachers, the music department, and where the toilets were! They often organised joint concerts and workshops for pupils to make music together. It sounds like really small things, but what we found out when we interviewed Year 6 children was that one of the things they were really worried about was where the toilets were when they went to secondary school. We worked nationally and developed some good hotspots with the music services who were really into it and followed it through in a big way. But like a lot of these programmes, it

was joyous when it was happening and then you wonder what the legacy was. I think that if the principle is still happening, whether it's with music or whether it's with PE or science, then strategy is still in place.

HC: Since you began working in music education in 1965, what do you feel have been the overall trends in provision in the UK?

LD: How long have you got? [laughs] I, along with others, often wonder, 'where have we got to?' Are we going round the same treadmill again? Are we repeating things? But in a sense that doesn't matter. I'd like to think that there's more awareness within the whole school now – that on the whole, headteachers and senior management are much more aware of what's happening in their music departments, other than providing them with showcasing concerts. And that's not just because of Sing Up and the whole class instrumental schemes, but generally. For example, TV programmes like the ones that Gareth Malone did in schools and local communities – lots of people were critical of that, but I wasn't. Anything we can do to increase public awareness about music education is important.

The other thing that is imperative is to provide equal opportunities for all pupils. I remember when I first started in Haringey, there was a division between those children who were having instrumental tuition and those who weren't. I think we've done a great deal to break down these barriers.

Whole-class instrumental tuition was, of course, an absolute godsend to those of us who had been fighting for equality of opportunity. I will bang my drum about that forever because I think it did work. I know that in Haringey, and in a lot of the London boroughs that I'm still in touch with, the principle of trying to ensure equality of opportunity for everybody is paramount, whether their parents can pay for it or not. We must make sure that we hang on to this principle of equal opportunities for everybody.

HC: Have you had a chance to look at or discuss the Model Music Curriculum in any detail?

LD: I haven't had a lot of involvement in talking about it, but I've seen it and I've looked at some of the detail. I must say that when I saw the list of listening extracts, I was slightly bemused and a bit confused. I thought, 'How on earth is that going to encourage and support a primary classroom teacher?' I know that music hubs are already providing CPD. It will be important for the government to now provide extra funding for this CPD.

I have to say that I wasn't really sure who it was for. I understand from talking to one or two colleagues that it's supposed to say, 'music is on the map and don't you forget it'. But it may take some primary school headteachers to be convinced because it's been forgotten over the pandemic. Quite rightly, they're making a fuss about children who seem to have forgotten how to read, but if they are singing, they'd soon start to read again and enjoy it.

Of course, I'm very interested to see how it will develop. It might be a very detailed and condensed document, but how it's used, how it's activated with properly funded CPD, is another really important thing.

HC: What are you hoping to share with Expo attendees?

LD: With any course I do, I try to encourage teachers, I try to give them confidence. I try to draw them out to find their own confidences, which I think is important. I think even in three quarters of an hour, I've got to leave teachers feeling that they can do something, and that they are thinking about what they're doing and why they're doing it. Those are usually my principles, whether I'm dealing with nursery and Early Years colleagues, or with secondary teachers working with GCSE classes, or whether someone from the instrumental team is taking a beginners' strings session or a beginners' brass class. You've got to help teachers find their own confidence, and at the same time, pass on a few specific ideas they can take away and do tomorrow.

HC: How do you feel generally about the future of music education?

LD: It's a cliché, but we've just got to keep banging the drum. Even those of us who are a bit long in the tooth, I think we've all got something to offer. Two of my own children are music teachers, and I'm certainly not despondent about the future. We've got to get behind organisations like Music for Youth and Youth Music. The Music Education Council, Music Mark, and the ISM are still there, and we've got to support the work that they do. I'm still very open and alive to wanting to support music education for *all* children. So I'm not put off by the fact that it is a bit difficult sometimes, and that not all schools are as enthusiastic at the moment as they were, but we've got to keep reminding the powers that be that music is a vital part of a properly balanced curriculum. MT

Leonora Davies will be presenting 'From body sounds to percussion instruments' at 10am in the Seminar Theatre on 25 September 2021. The session is suitable for Early Years practitioners. View the full programme and register for your free place at the Music & Drama Education Expo | London at **www.musicanddramaeducationexpo.co.uk**

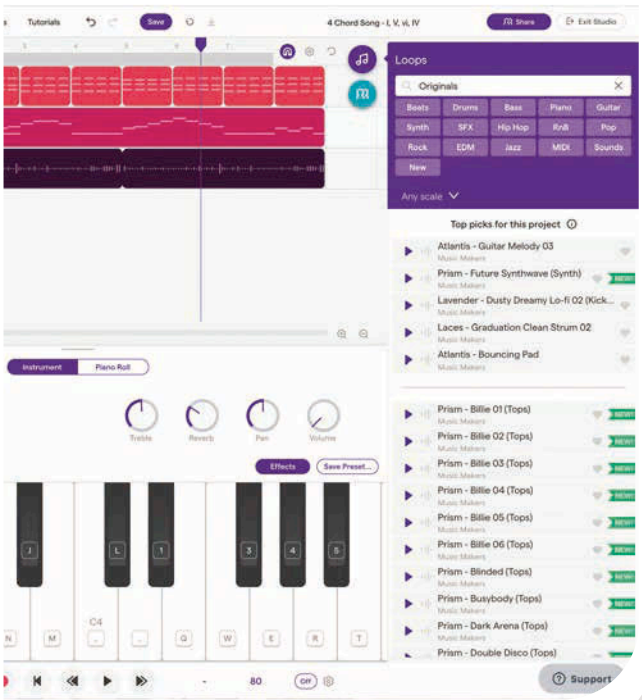
Online teaching materials

Each issue, *Music Teacher* publishes substantial schemes of work written by experienced teachers, examiners and experts. They cover Key Stages 3–5, as well as peripatetic teaching, across a variety of exam boards and specifications, providing indispensable content for your practice

July's online teaching materials

We cover KS3, KS4 and KS5 in the classroom in this month's three teaching resources. Last month, James Manwaring began an in-depth look at two valuable DAWs for classroom use with BandLab at KS3. This month he turns his attention to Soundtrap, offering guidance on getting to grips with the app as well as ideas for composing, performing and podcasting activities at KS3 and KS4. Simon Rushby continues his series offering suggestions for wider listening at KS4 and KS5: this month he reaches the Romantic period, with suggestions for listening activities based around Beethoven, Grieg, Smetana, Mussorgsky, Berlioz, Schumann, Verdi, Wagner and more. The first two movements of Haydn's Symphony No. 48 (*Maria Theresia*) form OCR's AoS1 prescribed work for A level in 2022. Hanh Doan provides an in-depth analysis of the movements in the context of Haydn's other music.

David Kettle, Resources Editor



OCR AoS 1: Haydn Symphony No. 48 (*Maria Theresia*)

Hanh Doan ▶ KS5

This prescribed work should be studied and contextualised within a number of other works in this Area of Study. Studying other symphonies by Haydn, as well as some by Mozart and Beethoven, will be essential in giving students the best overview of the symphony in the Classical period. Although Haydn remained mainly in one place throughout his life, understanding his movements in Europe, as well as those of his contemporaries, is key to placing this work into context and understanding the Classical period as a whole. Some detailed comparisons should be made with other first and second movements in other symphonies, but the overall form and structure should not be forgotten.

***Hanh Doan** is a former AST and head of music, and currently works as a part-time music teacher at Beaumont School in St Albans. She is the author of various books, and writes articles and resources for* Music Teacher *magazine, exam boards, and other music education publishers. She is also the OCR A Level Music Expert. .*

Soundtrap

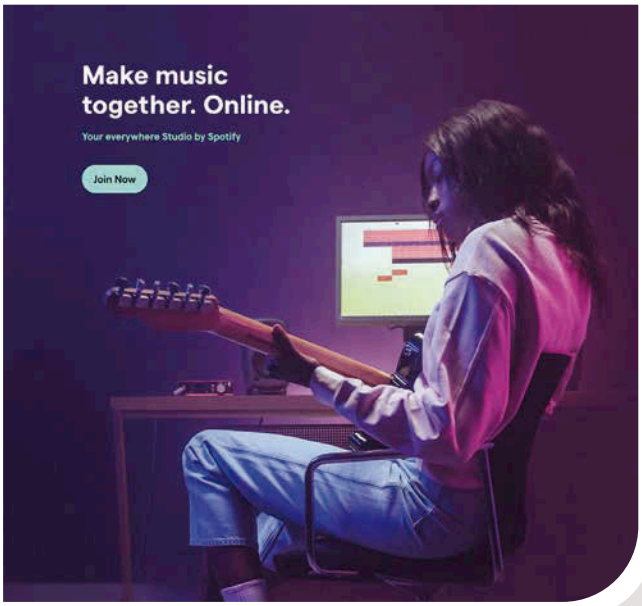
James Manwaring ▶ KS3/4

Following last month's resource on BandLab (*Music Teacher*, June 2021), this month we turn to Soundtrap. Soundtrap and BandLab are both digital audio workstations (or DAWs) based in the cloud. They are both launched through a web browser, and they have similar functionality. BandLab is a free DAW, whereas Soundtrap does come at a cost, albeit a reasonable one.

In this resource, I'll introduce Soundtrap, but I'll also point back to the BandLab resource where there are similarities between the two systems. Some of the concepts, functions and ideas around Soundtrap are similar to those discussed in the BandLab resource, but Soundtrap also has some unique functionality, including its powerful podcasting feature. Furthermore, some of the Soundtrap project ideas in this resource could be used equally well with BandLab.

You can access Soundtrap at **www.soundtrap.com.** If you're interested in a demo or trial of Soundtrap, contact either MusicFirst or Future DJs.

James Manwaring *is director of music for Windsor Learning Partnership and has been teaching music for 17 years. He is a member of the Music Teachers' Association and ISM, and he writes his own music blog.*



▲ *Robert Schumann*

Developing wider listening: the Romantic period

Simon Rushby ▶ KS4/5

The Romantic period, which lasted for most of the 19th century and left a strong legacy in the 20th and beyond, was a time of great change in all art forms. In this resource, which follows on from *Music Teacher* resources on the Baroque and Classical periods (November 2020 and April 2021 respectively), we will examine its style and characteristics through listening and practical activities.

Students studying GCSE and A Level Music need to have a broad overview of the context and style of their set works so that they can approach wider listening questions – which expect them to have experienced a diverse range of music – with confidence. In fact, all musicians benefit from developing their understanding of style through listening to music that they might not otherwise encounter.

Simon Rushby *is a freelance musician, writer and education consultant, and was a director of music and senior leader in secondary schools for more than 25 years. He is author of a number of books and resources, including the ABRSM's new* Discovering Music Theory *series and GCSE books for Rhinegold. He is an ABRSM examiner, and a songwriter, composer and performer.*

Log in to access this issue's resources

For access to the online teaching materials you must be a PLUS subscriber. Go to **musicteachermagazine.co.uk/online-teaching-materials** and click to download the file of your choice. You will be asked for log-in details including your account code, which can be found on the address label which came with this issue of *Music Teacher*. You can also email **subscriptions@markallengroup.com**

Write like a girl

HARRY BORDEN

While some progress has been made in the representation of women composers at all levels of music education, there's still a way to go. Harriet Clifford chats to Ruth Coles, a head of junior music who has created an inspiring project with the Berkeley Ensemble to introduce young students to the works of Errollyn Wallen

HC: What is the project and how did it come about?

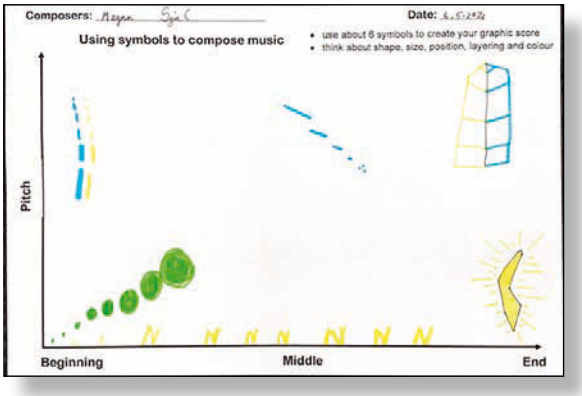
RC: This year has been incredibly challenging on so many fronts for so many people. As a music educator, I felt that it was even harder to deliver a meaningful curriculum when so much of what we were able to do was severely limited. Primary level music lessons are so much more than a lesson; groups of children come together to listen, share ideas, create, sing, and play. They leave the room energised and happy. There was a huge gap in my own life and those of the children I teach when this was not able to happen, despite putting together a swathe of virtual concerts and the jolliest remote lessons I could dream up.

▼ *Berkeley Ensemble players Sophie Mather (violin) and Dan Shilladay (viola)*

HARRY BORDEN

These children needed a voice, an outlet. They needed community, collaboration, and sharing of ideas. I wanted to use the advantages of the new platforms through which we communicate, while keeping it personalised and inspiring. I wanted to give our girls the opportunity to experience more than a music lesson and really study the work of a female composer in depth, and then become composers themselves. I approached the Berkeley Ensemble, who have done excellent work in secondary schools with GCSE Music students. It was definitely a meeting of minds. Having put together a plan, I was able to obtain funding through the GDST (Girls' Day School Trust) and collaborate with two other Trust schools – Sutton High and Howell's in Cardiff.

From this, we structured four workshops together with three sessions for teachers in school to run in between, aimed at children aged 6–8. Through a performance of Errollyn Wallen's *Five Postcards* by the Berkeley Ensemble's Sophie Mather and Dan Shilladay, the children would investigate the huge variety of sound and colour in



◀ *A graphic score created by a pupil at Howell's School*

these pieces. They would then begin to create their own graphic scores in order to compose their own 'postcard'.

HC: In general, what experience of music have the girls you teach had up until now?

RC: We are in a great position to be able to provide a really rounded and in-depth music curriculum across the GDST in junior schools. Generally, the teaching of music in a GDST junior school is seen through by one or two teachers and so we can build relationships with these young musicians and nurture their progression. The children are keen, confident, exuberant; a joy to teach.

HC: Why do you think that the children haven't had very much exposure to female composers before this project?

RC: We are living in a time of transition in addressing restrictive gender role stereotypes, but we cannot let up in this drive. Role models are incredibly important for young girls due to the long history of many fields being dominated and occupied by men. When devising a list of works for study at primary level, my entry point for the 'why?' is simple – ask anyone to write down the names of all the classical composers they know in 60 seconds. The go-to is Mozart, sometimes Beethoven, occasionally Bach. But with anyone writing that list, be it children or adults, it will always be comprised of a huge list of male composers and either none or a handful of female composers.

I work in an environment which actively promotes 'girls first' and we seek out opportunities to promote equality and challenge prejudice where it exists. It's really encouraging to see that the Model Music Curriculum contains some female composers, but they're still only book-ending the Western classical tradition, starting with Hildegard and ending with Meredith and Clyne.

HC: Can you tell me about the content of the workshops with the Berkeley Ensemble?

RC: Every workshop starts with performances or excerpts from the *Postcards*. Like teaching a text in literacy at this age group, we always start the session with the material so that the girls are as familiar as they can be. We have had two of the four workshops at time of writing this article, in which we have unpicked emotion and scenery for each Postcard, as well as working on what symbols might represent similar sounds. The girls have written short graphic scores which Sophie and Dan have then interpreted – immediate performance of one's score proved pretty amazing for these young composers!

Sophie, Dan and I wanted to ensure that the girls all had the opportunity to speak and share. So, there are lots of questions and answers across the schools, including much waving at each other from their various classrooms! Before the third workshop, the girls are creating a picture postcard for each other which they will receive at the start of the next workshop – they need to guess which of Wallen's *Postcards* the picture represents. They, in turn, will then send back a graphic score for their sender to interpret on tuned or untuned percussion.

HC: The workshops run until June – what happens then?

RC: In the final workshop, each school taking part will have composed collaboratively one 'postcard' which is then performed to them and the other schools. These will be recorded and the scores kept in order to form the basis of another set of workshops. The Ensemble and I are currently planning how we take this forward as we are all very keen that we make this as accessible as we can. At this stage, I know that we have the ability to share this with other GDST schools next year.

HC: Is this project something that could be replicated in other schools without an ensemble partnership?

RC: Yes. I am really keen that this could be used by any interested school or music teacher. It would be perfect for partner schools or schools in a Hub to use. I am also keen to include schools as a partnership project if they wish to join in the next academic year. If anyone is interested, they can email me at r.coles@bla.gdst.net. Should anyone want the materials and scheme, I will happily provide it. Equally, the Berkeley Ensemble are investigating how to make this available via their website www.berkeleyensemble.co.uk. MT

▼ *Ruth Coles, head of junior music at Blackheath High Junior School and Year 3 teacher*

HARRY BORDEN

Now, let's hear from the experts...

HC: What was your favourite thing about the project?

'It inspired me and my friends to make our own band. Also, one of the best bits was when they played my drawing!' *Melis, aged 7*

'When we were imagining things that the music felt like.' *Emily, aged 7*

'Getting pictures in your head.' *Esther, aged 7*

HC: Why do you think children like you should learn more about women who write music?

'Because I think all of us want to write music ourselves. You don't have to be a boy to write music.' *Emily, aged 7*

'I only knew about boy composers and Mozart and Handel and last but not least The Beatles before we did this project.' *Sahasra, aged 7*

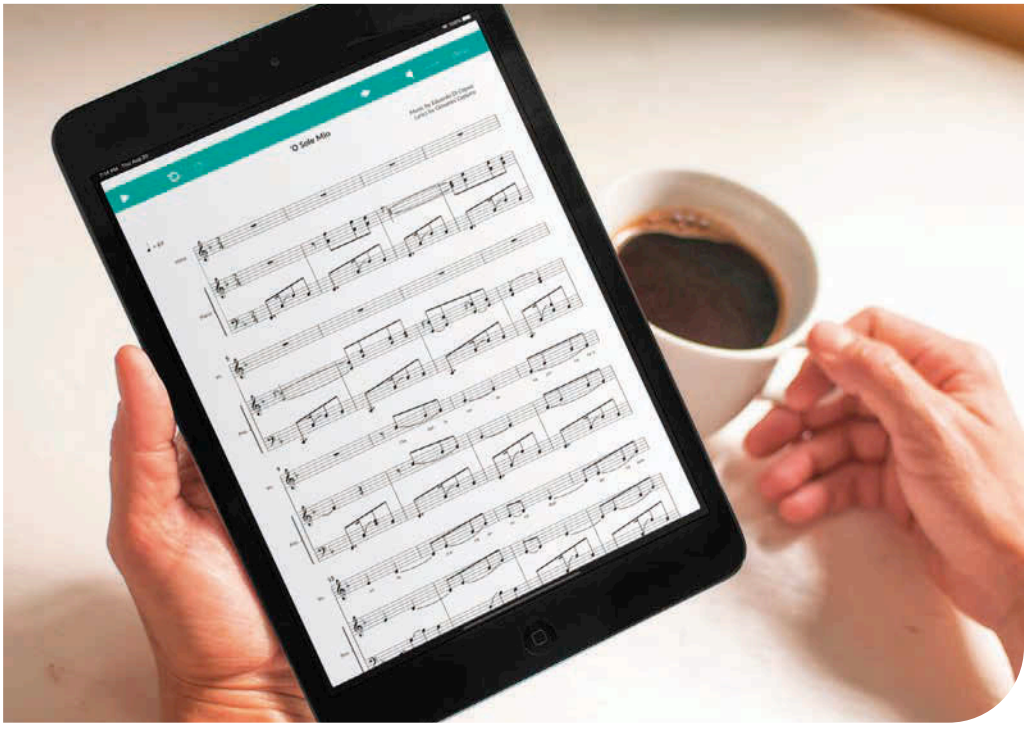
HC: What kinds of children do you think can write music if they want to when they grow up?

'Children like me, maybe?' *Melis, aged 7*

'Everybody, because if you want to write music, just do it.' *Emily, aged 7*

Score Creator

Trying to find free apps that are worth having is a very tricky business – particularly for music creation. There are now so many apps that offer quick hits of music making through the assembly of pre-recorded loops, that to find something worth having for longer use is a little harder. This leads me to Score Creator. I found this while I was looking for something else entirely and it intrigued me.



▲ *Score Creator is a simple app for music notation*

Basic elements

Score Creator is a very simple app that allows you to write basic notation on tablets and phones. It is currently available for iOS and Android and can be downloaded from the App Store and the Google Play Store. The basic version is free but there is a paid upgrade for those who want a greater number of staves.

Once opened, the app greets you with a couple of demo scores and, once you've created some, existing pieces of music that you have written. It is definitely worth exploring these to see how effective the scores can be, but I wanted to dive straight in and start exploring the creative element of the app, so I clicked on the menu and selected a 'New Song'.

When you begin a new project, the app asks you for all the usual basic information including key signature, time signature and tempo. On the right-hand side of the screen are the options for how many staves are needed and what instruments you want to compose for. I kept things simple in my first attempt and added a piano in 4/4 and C Major.

How it works

The score that appears is a simple, unpopulated stave with a set of buttons at the bottom of the screen to select pitches, values, accidentals, and other common musical devices. I was running this on my iPad that has an external QWERTY keyboard attached to it, and the way it was laid out implied I could type on my keyboard to input certain pitches – this is incorrect. I couldn't. The only way to enter pitches is by pressing on the virtual buttons on screen. However, this was quite easy and, given the target market of this app, it was probably a sensible choice to keep it simple.

The basic operation works by selecting a note value and then pressing the pitch you want from the selection on screen. The pitches aren't very clearly labelled – they use a large number of ledger lines to identify the notes on the buttons, but without context it's difficult to work out which one is which. Fortunately, they have written the letter names just above, so it doesn't take long to figure out, but it is a bit clumsy.

This app is a basic introduction for students to create quick musical scores on their own devices

If you want to select any other musical element for a note, such as an accidental or a triplet value, simply press the relevant button until you have finished using it. This latter point makes sense, but what I found slightly surprising was that rather than turning triplets off again, the button cycled through duplets, quadruplets, quintuplets etc. until I reached unaffected note values again. This makes sense given limited screen real estate – but was initially surprising.

A simple introduction

Other simple functions such as chords are created by pressing the shift button and adding more pitches and, if you need to go back to change a note or insert a note, simply click on the screen at the relevant point. The use of a touch screen in score writing is a valuable one. Once a basic score has been created, it can be emailed either as a file for work on another device or as a PDF to send to someone else (such as a teacher).

This app is not going to compete with the big score writing software companies, and nor does it want to, but as a basic introduction for students to create quick musical scores on their own devices, it is a really good start! **MT**

TIM HALLAS

Score Creator is free but paid upgrades are available.
scorecreator.net

Wall of Sound

Speaker emulations, such as the Wall of Sound plugin from Two Notes, were developed as partner pieces of software to load boxes that connect to guitar amps, allowing them to be turned right up without the deafening volume. Load boxes often disconnect the speaker from the guitar amp entirely, and software like Wall of Sound allows the sound of the amp to be captured via a computer and then run through a virtual speaker emulation.

To the non-guitarist (and to be honest, some guitarists too) this might sound like a complete waste of time – but it is amazing how much difference a speaker cab can make to the sound of a guitar. The difference between running an amp through a 1x8" speaker and a 4x12" is spectacular. Neither is better or worse – but they are very different. As a guitar nerd and a music technology teacher, the appreciation for what effect a speaker cab has on the sound of a guitar is something I instil in all my students.

However, most schools (or guitarists at home) don't have the facilities to run a cranked guitar amp through a 4x12 speaker – they are just too loud and too big. This is where the Wall of Sound really comes into its own. Simply record your guitar or bass through a preamp and load up the speaker emulation plugin on the relevant channels within your DAW.

▲ *Wall of Sound emulates the sound of different guitar cabs in acoustic spaces*

The Wall of Sound plugin is free to download and try – and you can try every speaker cab available from within the software. However, to keep using the software after 30 days you need to purchase at least one speaker emulation. These start at about €8 so are reasonable, and once you've bought one you own the licence for the software, which includes a couple of free cabs, so you have three to get you started.

Installation

The instructions when you download the software, and the steps on the company's website, imply that installation is easy. However, each time I have done it, it has been a pain. It took several attempts to get my DAW to register that the software was installed, and downloading my licences was equally as frustrating. However, once the software was eventually installed on my machine, it opens up and reads my licences perfectly every time.

▲ *Each cabinet can be bought for around €8*

Use

The plugin opens up with two guitar speakers in virtual rooms because it is emulating the sound of the cabs in a space in stereo. There are several different spaces to choose from with a variety of different levels of ambience, from tight studio sounds to huge concert halls.

There are so many amp options, but I started with an emulation of a speaker that I actually own – the Blackstar Artisan 2x12". I have had this amp for years, so I know exactly how it sounds. The emulation is pretty good, but it's a little darker than the real thing. This might be a variance in the particular speaker that was modelled, the room used, or the mic placement, but my real model has noticeably more treble.

However, the key thing is that it sounds good. With so much recording done at home by my students over the last year, it's virtually impossible for them to record a guitar amp for real, and plugins like this have really helped. Students have connected their guitar to their interfaces at home and then could run them through the Wall of Sound plugin at college once they returned to site in March.

Summary

This is a great plugin that adds an extra option for making guitars sound better when recorded directly. It has so many options to choose from that there are bound to be some speakers that your students will like the sound of and, at only €8.33 each, they are quite cheap too. **MT**

www.two-notes.com

Percussion Instruments and their History

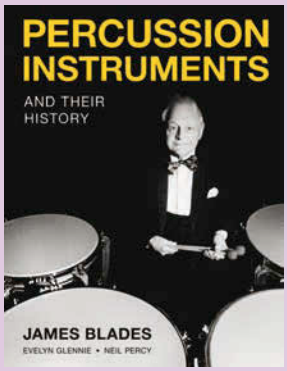
In his autobiography *Drum Roll*, James Blades recalls that in 1966, when looking at an early draft of this book, the publisher remarked, 'Everybody will learn from this book'; Blades quipped back, 'I've already learned never to write another'.

The work immediately established itself as the standard reference book on percussion, so it is wonderful to see it reissued with additional chapters: 'The Modern Solo Percussionist' by Dame Evelyn Glennie and 'The Modern Orchestral Percussionist' by Neil Percy. The main body remains true to Blades' original quest to catalogue percussion instruments, relate their history, and describe their use in all musical applications. This it continues to do very successfully, but with the addition of the contribution from two of the world's finest exponents of percussion, it has updated its coverage to the present day.

The new chapters look at some of the developments in percussion since the book's last edition. Glennie describes how, by increased interaction with manufacturers, existing percussion instruments have evolved, and new ones have been born; she examines how composers have become more interested in writing for these instruments as well as looking for new sounds to use in their compositions. In his chapter, Percy begins by explaining how professional percussionists have become all-rounders rather than concentrating on specialising in one area. Like Glennie, he describes the development of the myriad instruments that modern percussionists are expected to play, both new and re-inventions of traditional instruments, as well as the ever more sophisticated and demanding techniques required to produce quality sounds. He then goes on to discuss his vast experience of contemporary percussion as the principal percussionist with the London Symphony Orchestra.

As this is an updated edition of the book reflecting the developments in percussion, it might have been helpful to have some mention of the positive effect of the recent blossoming in educational settings across the globe of various percussion-based groups such as Djembe, Samba and Taiko. In addition, a little more on the use of percussion in music therapy and health and wellbeing settings would also have been beneficial.

However, the book remains the seminal work on percussion instruments and their use. Now with the addition of the new chapters, it is even more the essential reference guide for musicians and music educators on all things percussion. **MT**



PERCUSSION INSTRUMENTS AND THEIR HISTORY
James Blades
Guest chapters from Evelyn Glennie and Neil Percy
Kahn & Averill
ISBN: 0995757437
£45.95

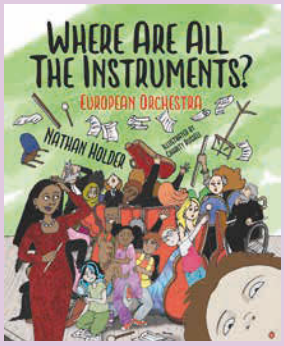
ANDY GLEADHILL

Where Are All The Instruments? European Orchestra

Where Are All The Instruments? is the story of an orchestra who come together to rehearse, only to find all their instrument cases empty. It is up to the Why Squad – an intrepid group of kids – to travel all over the world and into space to find the instruments. In the process, they learn fun facts about the instruments. EYFS teachers are encouraged to extend the book with kinaesthetic activities, perhaps hiding model instruments in the sandpit, in a space or jungle display, to help children notice their characteristics through discovery and comparison. An accompanying activity book including join-the-dots, handwriting, counting and more is also available.

Inclusivity is central to the storytelling – the orchestra is made up of people of all ethnicities and physical abilities and is directed by a black female conductor. It is called the Jumo Orchestra: Jumo being short for *Ajumose*, which means 'together' in Yoruba. Additionally, Holder makes clear that we are talking about a European orchestra; after all, Orchestra Baobab didn't feature any clarinets or violins.

The Why Squad is intended to be a group in which children see themselves reflected, and it is made up of two girls and two boys of black, Asian, and white ethnicities. Through the detailed, full-page illustrations, we follow them to the playground, beach, sea, desert, jungle, space, and back to the concert hall for the Jumo Orchestra's jubilant performance. This is a delightfully colourful and fresh approach to helping children discover the twenty-first century European orchestra. The one thing it lacks is a CD or streamed playlist to illustrate the sounds of the instruments individually and together, but assuming these can be found elsewhere, it definitely deserves a place in the music corner of your classroom. **MT**



WHERE ARE ALL THE INSTRUMENTS? EUROPEAN ORCHESTRA
Nathan Holder
Holders Hill Publishing
ISBN: 9781999753054
£8.99; Activity book £5.99; Bundle £13.49

HELENA RUINARD

Jazz Piano For Kids

It's a been long time since a book has filled a hole in the music education canon like this one. It has to be said, Richard Michael's *Jazz Piano For Kids* and its accompanying video training course, provides the ultimate guide to becoming a jazz pianist. It has been wonderful to watch his videos and play with his backing tracks, complete with jazz ensemble. I have been genuinely inspired by his outstanding step-by-step pedagogy and friendly yet empowering manner.

Michael personally presents all 45 videos (around 2 mins each) with practical activities that build systematically to enable students to become jazz literate rhythmically and harmonically; it also encourages students to use jazz scales such as modes. This resource provides all the tools needed to start effectively improvising.

Don't be put off by the title of this book – this is so much more than just jazz piano for kids. This is jazz piano for everyone including teachers, teenagers and adults; I would argue that the book teaches jazz training generally too. I have now used a selection of Michael's videos in my classroom and piano lessons and the children loved them. The videos are an essential component of this offering, so be sure to access them (easily via the code on the title page) immediately so you understand what it's about. The book design and presentation don't go anywhere near effectively communicating this treasure trove of content. It is worth noting that a child would need a teacher's support to understand and utilise the book.

The content is split into sections: Groove; Singing a Groove; How We Hear Chords; Strengthening the Fingers. The Playing Tunes and Solo sections then systematically trains in the following: Anticipation; Inversion; Repetition; Scales and Tone Transposition; Chords and Sequences; Guide Tones and the Sequence; Augmentation and the Blues Scale; Diminution; Jazz Harmony and Space; and Putting it all together.

Popular traditional folk melodies such as *She'll be Coming Round the Mountain* and *When the Saints* are used to showcase your new skills along with more traditional blues pieces and pieces based on classical repertoire by Paganini and a march by Tchaikovsky.

I have been genuinely inspired by his outstanding step-by-step pedagogy and friendly yet empowering manner

NGUPAKARTI/ADOBESTOCK

JAZZ PIANO FOR KIDS
Richard Michael
Hal Leonard Europe
ISBN: 9781540067807
£12.99

Music is around Grade 2 level or below and fingering is detailed and very helpful. The harmony is always given above the bar in addition to useful keyboard charts for scales and notation. The individual 'Skill' highlighted sections explain detailed techniques being used and the videos accompanying all of this are signposted throughout the book.

Michael is an honorary professor of jazz piano at St Andrew's University and is an active performer, which really shows in this resource. This book will take pride of place in my music library and will be used actively for decades to come. **MT**

KAREN MARSHALL

Richard Michael is speaking on Day 2 of the Music & Drama Education Expo in September. **mdexpo.co.uk**

Vox Telstar Drum Kit

VOX TELSTAR DRUM KIT
£1,755
voxamps.com

As a revamp of a classic 1960s design, the Telstar was originally made by Vox/Trixon but is now constructed under the supervision of Japanese master craftsmen Sakae Osaka Heritage. Its quirky retro styling certainly stands out from other available kits, but does the appeal extend beyond its unique looks?

The reviewed kit came with an eye-catching 'Silver Kroko' finish. The two toms offered a wide tuning range from fat, round '60s rock tones to tighter, more jazz-like sounds. The versatile snare was delicate at lower volumes but full and meaty when needed. However, it is clearly the kick drum which sets this kit apart. I initially found it difficult to tune but eventually found a balance. It was certainly interesting to be able to get a range of kick sounds from one drum aided in no small part by the vintage-style adjustable dampening (both a circular damper on the front head and a felt strip across the batter). I can see the kit being useful for drummers who need to switch abruptly between styles; while there is only one kick pedal included, there is space to mount two pedals, meaning you could switch mid-song.

This is a really fun kit with lots of idiosyncratic features which could perfectly fit the requirements of a specific sort of drummer

Unlike other kits of a similar price point, all hardware is included. Everything is lightweight and flat-based, in keeping with the styling. While it all looks great, I can't see the stands holding up against regular gigging (much less in a school environment) so I would probably recommend purchasing alternate hardware. This would likely increase the total price beyond £2,000 once cymbals are also included, pushing it well beyond the reaches of most departments.

I would be concerned about replacement heads for the unconventional kick drum. While advertisements boast that the kick heads supplied are made by market leader Remo, as the kit is currently only being produced in a limited run, I would worry about getting heads in future, not to mention the lack of choice in heads available. It was also disappointing that the much-heralded Remo heads included didn't extend beyond the kick drum. The heads on the rest of the kit would likely need replacing reasonably quickly, further adding to the initial outlay.

This is a really fun kit with lots of idiosyncratic features which could perfectly fit the requirements of a specific sort of drummer in a one-to-one setting, although I would struggle to see it fitting into the more general requirements of a school environment. **MT**

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MT meets Nate Holder

Recently appointed professor and international chair of music education at the Royal Northern College of Music (RNCM), Nate Holder is also an author, writer, speaker and professional saxophonist. Hattie Fisk catches up with him

NATE HOLDER

HF: Congratulations on your new role! Can you tell me a bit about your mission as international chair?

NH: My mission is to see how these conservatoires actually work for the students from the other side and understand where the conservatoire wants to go and how I can help them get there, or at least assist on the way. I want to help the students feel that they have more of a voice – the role is about understanding young people and trying to give them what they need, what they want, and opening and broadening horizons.

HF: What is the motivation behind your music-focused children's books?

NH: I want to give voices to people who haven't had voices and to shine a light on those who we haven't really heard of for different reasons, whose music is incredible regardless of their backgrounds. I think that if kids can grow up and name composers like Florence Price, Amy Beach, Tchaikovsky and Beethoven in the same sentence, then we've done a lot in terms of establishing more equality, and allowing children with different backgrounds, genders, races, and so on to see themselves as equals.

HF: How do you think teachers can encourage students to pursue a career in music?

NH: As teachers, one way you can do it is just to broaden horizons – introducing children to certain concepts, ideas and jobs from as early as possible. So, they know that there's something called a sound engineer, for example – there are so many different jobs out there. But also, it's difficult because sometimes there's a lot of emphasis on teachers having to do everything. There is an element of having to model certain behaviours and continuing your practice so that students see that you're still going and you're still learning, as opposed to them seeing you as a finished article.

HF: How can we support children to continue playing their instrument?

NH: I think modelling and showing children that this is a lifelong process of learning. It doesn't stop when you get to Grade 8, it doesn't stop when you get to Grade 5 Theory. Sometimes a simple thing like repertoire can help – and I don't mean repertoire as in sitting and reading from scores – I mean I think we don't listen enough. We don't have a broad range of listening where it's not about picking up the harmonies and understanding the texture and the timbre. Instead, listening and enjoying and talking about it. It doesn't have to be anything more than that sometimes. But in that act, I think we can broaden students' minds.

HF: Do you have any tips for bringing the topic of decolonisation into the classroom in a productive way?

NH: I think it's important to make it relevant to today. Look around the classroom – what's linked all this together? Why haven't you ever heard about this person before? Just linking it back to their everyday lives and helping them to understand is important. It's about getting kids to be critical and getting them to ask the questions they might not have thought about before. We want to encourage independent thinking and help them understand that these things that might have happened 200, 300 years ago have real world consequences for them now.

There's no wrong way to do music

HF: What are your thoughts on the Model Music Curriculum?

NH: I tweeted about that quite a bit. Generally, I think there were missed opportunities, terrible uses of language, and terrible miscommunications. There was disregard for teachers as well. When it came to changes that were being made to the document on the fly, it just felt very detached. You're never going to appease everybody, but if you've made mistakes, I think it's important to acknowledge them. There are some positives you could take away from it – I don't think it's all negative. But maybe that's just my personality!

HF: As an accomplished professional saxophone player, what are your tips for young musicians?

NH: Listen to music – listen, listen, listen. Another tip is that it's okay to like something. Even if a song is not being studied in school, even though it might not have the most complicated harmonic structure or melody, it's okay to like it. There's no wrong way to do music, in my opinion. So, listen more, don't be afraid to be wrong, and just do what you enjoy. **MT**

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